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*Lecturer at the University of Louvain (Belgium)*

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Towards  
Religious Maturity





# Psychological Conditions of Adult Faith

by Antoine VERGOTE

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## INTRODUCTION : THE IMPLICATIONS OF A FREE CONSENT TO THE WORD

Faith is a free consent to the Word by which God gives himself to man. In return, faith frees man from his bonds. Like truth itself and any true relation between two subjects, it both presumes freedom and leads to it. Religious faith, as a human act, is this paradox of initiative and welcome, of purpose and receptivity. Man opens himself to the creative Word, and the Word dilates man and awakens him to a freer consent. Faith, in releasing man from his bonds, arouses in him a more docile attention to the Other.

This double rhythm which is the pulse of encounter and exchange presumes a first rise of freedom. The measure of a man's inner freedom is that of the freedom which revelation brings him. It is his encounter with the Other which liberates him from his egocentric attitude. But then that encounter must take place.

Now only a man psychologically adult seems able to apprehend in reality the other as he exists in himself, and to love him for what he is. Even this is only a paradigm used to convey the development of man and his relations with others ; the creative desire is but an ideal towards which human love tends.

This adult age is indeed of a psychological order. If in our society aptitude to marriage is a sign of adult age it is neither on the ground of a physiological maturity or simply of social working conditions ; it is an accepted fact that marriage presumes a certain degree of

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1. Monsieur l'abbé Antoine VERGOTE was born at Courtrai in 1921. He won Doctorates in both Theology and Philosophy at Louvain University. In 1954 he was appointed Conference Master, and in 1959 took charge of a Course at the same University. He lectures on epistemology and religious psychology. He is also a member of Societies of psychology, philosophy and psycho-analysis. He has published the following articles : *Le IV<sup>e</sup> Evangile, la psychologie d'Aristote et de S. Thomas, Freud et la psychanalyse, Angoisse et religion*. — Address : 8 rue Jean Stas, Louvain, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

experience of life and human balance, but little is said of a capacity for love. It is taken for granted, and is expected to follow automatically the physiological maturation and a certain self-control which is the fruit of a good education. Yet the effective encounter with another and the ability to know this other as himself, essential conditions of a happy union, are not necessarily within reach of a well-bred and physiologically grown man. This encounter is part of human history, and its eventualities are foreshadowed by the past history of the subject. Similarly, the encounter with God is not immediately accessible to man. It is cradled in a human history, which prepares and determines its effective possibilities. Our psychic development is a determining factor in our eventual apprehension of the living God.

Far from us the attempt to limit the amplitude of human possibilities to an adult equilibrium. But with due regard to the inventive wealth of childhood and the dynamic and avid wonder of adolescence, we still must admit that genetic psychology is guided by a just presentiment when it gives its preference to adult age. Certain of its behaviourist criteria may well be severely criticized, like that of adaptation to reality, or social output. Man is not in himself an accomplished being, and certainly not a social function, and it would be fatal to keep religious psychology within the confines of a positivist psychology which runs the risk of stifling all our present anthropology. Fervent adherents of psychotechnique are a serious threat to the advent of adult faith ; for instead of raising in man a free consent, always personal and original, they seek to hedge him round and encircle him in their economic concepts. True faith will always be a spiritual childhood, the attitude of belief will always find renewal in the rise of ever revolutionary youth.

This warning against psychology need not however dispense us from examining the psychological conditions of adult faith. The knowledge of the one living God is possible in a man as tormented and neurotic as Bernanos' country priest. But we must agree that the psychological fragility of man corrodes both his human and religious gift. The psychologically adult age conditions the plenitude of faith. This is what we intend to prove, by examining faith in its relations with the two elements which characterize adult psychology : affective autonomy and social responsibilities.

Our study will follow at every stage the double movement which operates between human psychology and religious commitment : the advent of a new phase in the attitude of man towards his existence and towards his world may each time influence his religious faith and enlighten him on the inadequacy of his past acceptance of a provisional truth. Thus human experience can

prepare an adjustment of faith and throw light on new virtualities. Faith is inserted in history as well as human existence.

## I. AFFECTIVE AUTONOMY AND SPIRITUAL CHILDHOOD

a. The believer is a child of God. Unless adult man returns to the state of childhood and becomes like a child, he will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 18, 1-4). For the believer is he who, from the heart of his humanity accepted and recognized, calls the living God : « Father ». Before the redemptive teaching of Christ, no man had dared to address God-All-Other as such. In this word, he acknowledges himself to be man and not God, and at the same time he opens himself to a Word which transcends him. From now on God is his God, and he is son of God just as the Son of man. It is his glory to be son of God because he has given up his will to be a god. As St. Paul says : faith is obedience. The glory of the Christian is to be glorified by the Father, after having accepted with humility his human impotence. Christ first, the Christian after him, are marked by the dialectic of the Cross.

Obedience to the Word, accepted dependence, trust in the power and the protection of the Living God ; are not these Christian virtues, these modes of existence incompatible with an adult psychology ? For adult man is independent, he is critical, and he is creative. The paradox of Christian existence is a problem for many of the faithful, who, unable to face it, solve it by a denial of spiritual childhood. Or else, which is not less frequent even if it is less flagrant, they take refuge in a false spiritual childhood, which is the immediate transposition of a human infantilism.

b. In no human sphere is the danger of infantilism greater than in the sphere of religious faith. Seeking to introduce, in the heart of the religious attitude, interpersonal family relations, it often fails and in the relations with God, slips into filial attitudes which derive from a simply human childhood. Christian dogmatic itself may present the illusion of truly religious relations, while in reality there exists only a prolongation of a human attitude.

The close dependence of the religious attitude on the first family formation may also influence the dialogue between God and man. Psycho-social research on religious behaviour have confirmed this truth daily experienced, that early formation in the family exercises a predominant influence on adult religious practice. On the most varied cultural levels, the assimilation by the child of the religion



of the parents predetermines his future religious behaviour. The main reason is that the family, in its very structure, presents many striking analogies with the religious institution, thus preparing the entrance of the child into it.<sup>1</sup> There is a symbiosis between family and spiritual appartenance.

Family structure can be said to be virtually religious.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in a Christian family, feasts, ceremonies, values and principles are on the same religious and familiar scale. This family draws its cohesion from the religious tradition which it shares and transmits.

A serious study of the psycho-social reality of the family would therefore elucidate why parental influence is so predominant in religious behaviour.<sup>3</sup> Its ambivalence is sufficient to prove it. Rooted in the family constellation, the religious attitude is more likely than any other behaviour to retain the infantile characteristics of its prime emergence all the more so that its dogmatic content goes back to it as its birthplace. There is a certain insistence, apparently mystical, on the desire to be in all things a child of Mary, which renders a hollow sound. This attitude, which is uncongenial to the solid Christian who is embarrassed by its false confidences, does not deceive an experienced ear. It is an easy caricature of spiritual childhood.

c. Human childhood is stamped by its essential prematuration. At its birth, the child finds himself absolutely dependent on others. And if he is soon aware of the loving looks and smiles of his parents, his affection for them remains essentially narcissic, in the technical sense of the term. He loves those who care for him and feed him. His tenderness as his demands are addressed to those who surround him with kindness, and maintain him in affective peace and joy. The others, who are deaf to his sollicitations, he expels from his world as bad; he leaves them out of his universe. But, towards kindly persons, he is, according to Piaget's formula, in an affective syncretism.<sup>4</sup> He possesses no explicit conscience of himself or of

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1. See A. T. BOISEN, *Religion in Crisis and Custom: a Sociological and Psychological Study*, New York, 1955, p. 35 ss.

2. G. MURPHY in: G. LINDZEY, *Handbook of Social Psychology*, New York, 1955, pp. 601-623.

3. See the two enquiries: G. ALLPORT, G. M. GILLESPIE, J. YOUNG, *The Religion of the post-war College Students*, in *Journal of Psychology*, 1948, 3-33. And the investigation carried out by the INSTITUT FRANÇAIS D'OPINION PUBLIQUE, published in: *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, 15 Dec. 1958, p. 13.

4. This phase of indifferenciation has been described by many psychologists. See on the subject: PIAGET, *Les relations entre l'affectivité et l'intelligence dans le développement mental de l'enfant* (Course at the Sorbonne), Paris, 1954, pp. 57-59.



others. His subjectivity embraces others and the world of objects, as far as they are good. Neither he nor others are private subjectivities, as all happens within a perfect reciprocity of which pleasure is the regulating principle.

But man must grow beyond this egocentric attitude. In the beginning his affectivity is awakened and formed in and through his vital needs, which seek enjoyment and conservation in life. This affectivity, however, contains the germ of the knowledge of the other which is called love, and which it will only reach after a prolonged expansion. The child has no access to the point of view of another. The original affective undistinction has no knowledge of it.

Religious attitude is inscribed in its affectivity and follows its curve, even when it begins to introduce the child, in an obscure manner, into the presence of the All-Other. The child sees his god in the image of his father and attributes to him the essential qualities of his father. They are on common ground, are made of the same stuff, which is familiar to an affectivity which embraces all encounters within his own perspective. For the child, God co-exists with the father. Adult man may remain attached to this first experience of the other, and seek in every man a father who would respond to his always unsatisfied demands. Or he may cling to the paternal image of his God, seeking to satisfy his vital and affective needs, which remain like open wounds, even under cover of a successful social career. In this case, God is the captive of the egocentric universe of an anguished and starved affectivity. He is not apprehended in his own being, no more than the father is for the child.

The classical example, often cited by depth-psychologists, is that of a man internally consumed by a feeling of insecurity. He may fulfil important functions, but there is a weak spot in his system and his lack of certitude throws him into an intolerable state of abandon. There are stiles in the field of his existence which only others can help him to cross, day after day. It has been noted that this type of man clings sometimes particularly to Providence. When he prays, he is no longer alone. With God, he hopes to do all he feels unable to do. He loves to dwell on this permanent support which accompanies him in all the trials of life. Besides, traditional prayers echo his own history. «The Lord is my shepherd. He is my rock...». In his thought, and in all interior conflicts, he experiences the value of his trust. Are not men strong because they pray, because God is with them?

At other times, religion may appear to them as immensely sad, and deadly dull. They long to rely on their own strength. Their

dependence on others is a burden and they find no permanent relief in the kindness of their Father in Heaven. They are lonely in their solitude, and no one can deliver them. They are burdened and oppressed, and the yoke of Christ does not alleviate the yoke of their own existence.

Indeed, apart from moments of intense desires of human peace, religion brings them no true joy. It fails to be an independent dynamic value, and only a value lived and experienced can be a source of creation and joy. Religion enslaved by desires of security and human serenity may help to make life more tolerable ; reduced to a human end, it can still transfuse a dim light of its own truth. But in the form of a function, not an autonomous value, it cannot transform man through divine truth.

A human image is always interposed between God and the man who is not affectively autonomous. This is why crisis-born vocations so often turn into vocation crises. As soon as the subject is delivered from his infantile affective needs, he abandons religious life. Even conversions follow this rule. Let me recall the case of a young convert, who, in a state of deep depression, and left to herself, discovers the Church, Mystical Body of Christ. The vitality of Christ continued in humanity, sensibly present in the Sacraments, building up the great human family. This Christian truth, she had discovered in a lightning experience, which lasted a few weeks, and filled her with an extraordinary joy and plenitude. An authentic conversion, obviously. Yet, it was only a fugitive light in a state of twilight depression. This reality of the Mystical Body, admirably apprehended and experienced during a few weeks, responded too naturally to an immense desire for vital warmth and tenderness. Under the sway of a new depression, the creative joy of this young faith became singularly blurred. Long months of bitter disappointments and consecutive rebellions were to follow, before she found her way again to this new vital centre, discovered at the summit of an exasperated affectivity.

d. The encounter with the living God takes place in a theocentric faith and demands the displacement of the centre of interest and the point of view. A self-bound affectivity knows only its own point of view and brings everything back to itself. No true dialogue can occur, because the urgency of his affective needs withdraws man from the thoughts of the Other, even though it has a power of attraction. The religious life of men affectively non-adult runs the risk of wasting itself in a limited number of purely human functions.

Adult faith, fostered by an affectivity liberated in some measure from itself, will be a dogmatic faith. It will seek God as He is in

his own being, as He has uttered Himself in His Word. God can be our salvation, in the measure in which man communes with life strange to him, beyond his human needs. But this living God, far from fulfilling his desires, will often deceive them. He satisfies man, but against man's own demands.

Enquiries have proved that the adult often abandons dogmatic faith.<sup>1</sup> This is particularly true among protestants, as dogma as well as form of worship are largely left to their own choice. It would be interesting to study the direction of this movement towards a liberal faith. We may presume that it reveals the uneasiness of the adult in the face of a doctrine too imbued with infantile imagery. The trouble is that the non-dogmatic God remains to a large extent the God of man's own conception, according to his own desires. Affective autonomy may therefore bring about a religious crisis. This is a salutary crisis, as the renunciation of the desire of God prepares the discovery of divine paternity. Affective autonomy, as feature of adult psychology, appears at first sight contrary to the psychological conception of childhood and of obedience in faith. At certain times indeed it stands in effective opposition, but in reality it is its condition.

## II. INSERTION IN THE SOCIAL BEING AND SPIRITUALITY OF ADULT MAN

a. Professional and family responsibilities form and express psychological maturity. In them, the absolute and undetermined aspirations of youth find their reality and their efficacy. Less « idealist » in sentiment, adult man is capable of gauging reality by the measure of values, and by his personal decisions, he can introduce in the landscapes of social life the notion of the last ends. Youth is almost uniquely concerned with the future ; it moves in the temporary, and derives from its still undefined possibilities the freshness of the detachment which is its charm. Adult man founds a family ; it is the great work of his life. He has gone beyond the solitary indecision between hope and reality. He can commit himself, because stability is the condition of realization. More detached from his « ideal, » he takes his responsibilities and lives no longer by procuration.

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1. ALLPORT, *The Individual and his Religion*, New York, 1953, pp. 40-44. An enquiry carried out among 500 American university students reveals that the majority have remained religious and believe in a God, but only a quarter have adhered to theological dogmatic, and more than 56 % reject the church in which they have been brought up.

He has not for all that relinquished his creative will. In attaining psychological adult age, he has found a true and institutional channel of invention, and he precisely escapes the paralyzing alternative between accommodation and revolutionary dream of happiness. The adult who has not attained a certain degree of maturity refuses to commit himself in any definitive undertaking ; or else he superimposes on small daily events a wild aspiration towards total happiness. He may stifle his ideal in accommodation, or leave it on the nostalgic horizon of his short-sighted daily round ; but he does not really take possession of it. As all neurotics, he lives in a constant to-and-fro between the real and the imaginery.

b. Man may retain internal division, and it happens that a cleavage occurs between his psychological transformation and the evolution of his religious attitude. More often however, the profound change caused in him by social and professional responsibilities challenges anew his religious attitude. It may not reach a crisis, but there is always a definite conflict between the new mode of existence of the adult and his religious attitude. Statistics indeed set the problem of the astonishing evanescence of religious practice at adult age. The enquiry conducted by J. H. Fichter<sup>1</sup> shows the religious profile of a medium American community as such : great religious fervour during adolescence and post-adolescence ; lapse in religious practice after the age of 20 ; between 30 and 39, the abstention is more marked ; after that age there is a progressive improvement. C. W. Telford,<sup>2</sup> who has studied the religious attitude of 1000 University men before and after their military service, concludes on a levelling on a lower scale. Among the most fervent, fidelity is on the wane, among hostile subjects, there is a real discovery of religion ; from this collective compromise results a decrease of religious life at adult age.

c. The significance of these figures is obviously not univocal. Many examples tend to show that the creative expansivity reached by the adult often throws him into conflict with the demands of a practised faith. Social contact with non-Christian conceptions, and above all the feeling that Christianity is absent from the human world, may gradually develop in him intellectual doubts on the truth of Christianity. And there is another doubt, more insidious and more total, which invades him in virtue of his human maturity.

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1. J. H. FICHTER, S.J., *The Profile of Catholic Religious Life*, in *American Journal of Sociology*, 1952, 58, 145-149.

2. C. W. TELFORD, *A Study of Religious Attitudes*, in *Journal of Social Psychology*, 1950, 31, 217-230.



He acquires sometimes a sense of the inefficacy, and consequently of the illusory character, of religion. In so far as he is fully man, he finds in himself and in human values the spring of his creativeness. Is faith of any use to him? We cannot ignore the pertinency of the question; because so far, faith has greatly helped him to become a man.

This feeling of the inanity of the religious attitude is often strengthened by the experience of a pronounced conflict which makes the attitude of faith appear in all its difficulty. For many, abandon and self-effacement before the All-Other, essential tenets of the attitude of faith, seem incompatible with the creative and expansive surge. Some do not reason out this conflict, yet it is at the heart of their existence. Passivity and humility are felt to be a menace to the self of one who achieves realization. And, unless he remains on the human slope of the religious question, the believer must accede to this stage of receptivity, to this contemplative component of Christianity. To believe is to allow God to will in us, and in us to accomplish our salvation, at times almost against our will. Faith is together intellectual assent and personal trust.

d. The conflict may be singularly aggravated by an excessive stress, in certain forms of Christianity, on so-called passive virtues. Humility, obedience, chastity, seem at times to constitute the most essential Christian attitude. These qualities — real without the shadow of a doubt — appear to certain Christians as very irritating Biblical themes, in so far as they express a depressing human impotence. « The poor of Israel, those who weep and thirst for justice »... shining truths which have shed their paradoxical eloquence! Because they are associated with psycho-social attitudes of weakness and secret resentment, unwelcome failures and inefficient desires! Psycho-social research on the formation of religious sects have very clearly proved that those who are attracted by the sects are the restless, the unhappy, the emigrants and those who have lost caste.<sup>1</sup> The sect seems to offer them a fatherland where they are admitted and recover their value. Separated from others, and blessed by a privileged and absolute religious experience, they re-discover in the sect the social status which society as a whole denies them. Psycho-sociological analyses clearly reveal the secret motives of a sectarian attitude prevalent in certain Catholic circles, which is distasteful to lay adults. This sectarianism finds expression in the eclipse of active virtues such as creative generosity, of initiative,

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1. See for ex. W. R. CATTON, *What Kind of People does a Religious Cult attract?*, in *Am. Sociological Review*, 1957, 22, 561-566.

responsibility, the courage of one own's conscience, truth in affirmations of scientific order, loyalty and truthfulness in politics and in relations with non-Christians.

It is a lack of humanity which is found also in the tearful tone of certain prayers, in accents of false complaisance of devotions centred on the symbol of the heart. No inspired text produces this uneasiness, at least if it remains inserted in the context of its primary and paradoxical experience.

If Christianity appears at times to make a man less virile, it is not due to the exigencies of Christ or of St. Paul which have the power of provoking and scandalizing the man of the world. They contest his humanist creativeness and may provoke his revolt, but never lead to a state of « ennui, » for they invite no connivance with human weakness. Therefore the present re-discovery of inspired texts must bring about a more authentic encounter of man with God. Human deficiency will no longer obscure to this extent the interrogation of man by the living God.

e. Lay spirituality in the Church of to-day corresponds certainly with the effort of the adult believer to establish harmony between his faith and his social commitments. If there exists a trans-temporal history of salvation, which the Christian must accept in humble obedience to the Word, this history is yet objectively unachieved. It remains to be done everywhere in the human universe, in a praxis which penetrates the history of man. True faith is not solely a trusting welcome of salvation ; it is also an active service in the Kingdom of God. And if it is the great task of adult man to build human society, it is a no less greater one to build the city of God. It is the adult's double task ; to build up the Church, and also to propagate the Christian sense of the realities of the world and of the profession. This vocation calls for all his human qualities. It can only be fulfilled by men who have reached the adult age of social and constructive realism.

In his prayer, St. Paul faces the God of the Covenant, and answers to his mission. He did not find God in the interior of the soul but in an historical call.<sup>1</sup> God placed him in front of an unachieved world. Is it not this call, rather than that of the God appealing to the heart, which adults are more apt to hear ?

The situation of the woman-mother is somewhat different. If the woman is not affectively troubled by anguish or misery, by the family burden, maternity may be for her a privileged religious

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1. See L. CERFAUX, *L'Apôtre en présence de Dieu*, in *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux*, Gembloux, 1954, T. II, pp. 474-475, 478.

event. She experiences a reality which transcends her. Maternity introduces her into the mystery of life, which is beyond her and which yet enters into her. The child born of her body, she receives as a gift. Whatever she does to prepare birth, the child is not her work in truth. She accepts him in wonder. And this acceptance is for her like an initiation into the religious mystery of the origins of life.

Can this be the reason why woman in our civilization practises her religion better than man? It cannot be the only reason... But without doubt the interior consent to her femininity and her maternity places her in an attitude of receptivity which prepares her to the contemplation of the absolute. Man, on the contrary, through the very process of his psychological « maturation, » is inclined to resist the religious invitation to the abandon of himself. And only a proper spirituality of believer in the world allows him to live his life of man and Christian without compromise. By himself applying religious values to human history, he is able to meet them and accept them.

## CONCLUSIONS

We have mentioned only two factors which affect the problem of faith at adult age. Another worth considering is the experience made by each adult of human resistance to religious ideal, experience of which the issue is called : the realism of maturity. This also challenges his religious attitude. Another point for study is the desire for the integration of the personality which all psychologists acknowledge as a major process of psychological maturation ; the religious attitude, by the fact of its absolute value, cannot remain outside this movement of unification. Laying aside for the moment these new aspects, we will draw the conclusion of our present considerations.

In the story of humanity in the course of ages, there are several possible centres of living faith. The child, the adolescent, and the adult each enter these centres in their own way, and realize original possibilities. But these centres are not juxtaposed, simply and purely. There is a history of the individual, and therefore a history of his religious attitude.

The psychological growth of man goes through this rupture of the affective symbiosis existing between him and the universe, above all between him and others. While he frees himself from the affective attachment which is the mainstay of his existence and thus conquers his affective autonomy, he at the same time loses

an image of God and a religious practice which were the prolongation of his affective childhood. This affective infantilism is frequently dressed in noble evangelical terms which may be deceptive, but it is radically opposed to spiritual childhood.

This rupture does not constitute a spontaneous movement towards a humanly and religiously adult attitude. To turn towards the living God as He is and has revealed Himself requires a radical transformation of the religious attitude. The term conversion may apply, even if it extends over many years, and even if God has already revealed Himself to the adolescent under His true name.

This theocentric conversion may be very inhibited by a non-adult psychology. Faith indeed transcends in some way the individual inherence into a psychology which absolutely ignores the disparity of the other. But the plenitude of faith remains conditioned by the human substance in which it is rooted.

Knowledge of the other imposes on the adult a responsibility towards others. He knows how to assume them. Thus he inserts himself in the concrete texture of the world which is in the making and to which he brings the fruit of his initiatives, however humble.

This commitment is of course incompatible with a belief in a God who marshals the course of things, so the faithful are seen to have recourse to their God mainly in cases where they are powerless in face of events. But if circumstances do not require them to bring into play their religious attitude to foster their human desires, they are torn between their attitude of trust and their human creativeness. A false accentuation of passive virtues aggravates the conflict.

Only a spirituality able to combine the attitude of faith with the sense of human creativeness will maintain its position at the level of adult psychology, and bring man to the synthesis of two attitudes which at the outset seem to repudiate one another.

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# The Congregation Speaks Up

A report on the session of German professors of Homiletics,  
held in Würzburg, during the Easter of 1960<sup>1</sup>

by Balthasar FISCHER

Professor on the Faculty of Theology.  
held in Würzburg, during the Easter-week of 1960<sup>1</sup>

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After centuries of listening (or submitting) in silence to sermons, our congregations are finally beginning to speak up. Since their voice will be a gage of our preaching efforts, we might wonder what kind of an omen it holds for our times. Certainly, no one could find fault with the way in which Pierre Charles, S.J. († 1954), in an article which has since become famous,<sup>3</sup> raised his own voice in behalf of those congregations, which till then, were condemned to the lot of silence. He pictured himself as the man, who during his whole life had been sitting quietly at the foot of the pulpit like a meek and motionless « lamb, » and who finally felt like « bleating » a bit.

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1. This article originally appeared in the *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift*. The author of the article, who has graciously authorized its reproduction here, refers in his footnotes to a number of works which were part of the copious post-war literature that was produced in Germany on the renewal of preaching. The following seem to him of particular significance: J. GÜLDEN and R. SCHERER, *Vom Hören des Wortes*, Freiburg, 1949; J. RIES, O.M.I., *Von rückwärts verwunden. Predigt und konkrete Situation*, in *Lebendige Seelsorge*, 5 (1954), 109-123; V. SCHURR, C.S.S.R., *Situation und Aufgabe der Predigt heute*, in *Verkündigung und Glaube*, a collaborated work, published on the occasion of Professor Arnold's sixtieth anniversary by Th. FILTHAUT and Jos. A. JUNGSMANN, Freiburg, 1958, 185-208; Sturmius GRÜN, O.S.B., *Unsere Predigt in Krise und Erneuerung*, in *Anz. f. d. kath. Geistlichen* (1959 and 1960).

2. Biographical note in *Lumen Vitae*, XIV (1959), p. 103. — Address: Olevigerstrasse, 26, Trier, GERMANY (Editors' note).

3. *Le sermon du point de vue de l'auditeur*, in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, 69 (1947), 563-580 (= Charles). This article is the first in a special issue devoted to preaching and is signed *Silens*; however, the inimitable style leaves no doubt that Père Charles is its author. In the same issue, Pères Charles published two other important articles on the theology of preaching and the popular element in the sermons of St. Augustine. We later make reference to the English translation of the article signed *Silens*. This translation is evidence of the interest which he stirred up. Nevertheless, the English commentators believed, at the time, that it was written by a Belgian layman.

In the meantime, weekly magazines were working out inquiries into the layman's reaction to the sermons he was hearing.<sup>1</sup> It was also reported that a mass of correspondence was starting to pile up on the editors' desks in response to these inquiries.

One naturally feels inclined to be cautious in the wake of such a « mobilization » of our congregations. One can legitimately wonder whether those people who are only too ready to pick up their pens are really the most typical members of our congregations and the tendency is to answer in the negative. One can also question the value of throwing the subject of our preaching into open discussion at all. Might not such a public discussion carry with it the danger of losing sight of certain essential facts? The fact, for example, that in all Christian preaching — however imperfect its extrinsic form may be — there is a limit beyond which open discussion has no right to go; namely, the incontestable message which it contains and upon which depends the salvation or loss of both the herald and the hearer.<sup>2</sup>

It may be that a hesitantly delivered sermon, which for lack of form has justly invited the criticism of one hearer, might have touched and changed the heart of another, because of the mysterious workings of divine grace. (Obviously, a notoriously ill-prepared preacher should not rest on this real possibility.)<sup>3</sup>

And finally, how can we hope to discover, through these unknown correspondents, to what extent this regrettable ineffectualness of our sermons is due, not to the preacher, but to the hearer and to his peculiar mode of receptivity? Perhaps it is due to neither of them but instead to the « evolving structures of modern society. »<sup>4</sup>

Despite all these difficulties, it is still a wise thing to give our congregations the chance to voice their opinion about our preaching. We experience a sort of liberation in the process. No matter what else a sermon may be, it is fundamentally a human exchange, a dialogue, and as such, demands a certain reaction in the other

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1. Confer the inquiry that was conducted not long ago by the widely circulated review: *Mann in der Zeit* on reactions to preaching. H. STEINBACH, in this same periodical, discussed the results of similar inquiries: 60 (1951), 416-424.

2. If H. SCHELSKY really believes that the sermon should be replaced by an informal talk which involves no engagement, we have to reject the idea as does SCHURR (187, 199-201). We must not confuse Schelsky's proposal with the need our present day sermon audiences feel for a talk which is, in its manner of presentation, informal. Such a need simply emphasizes a fundamental element in human exchange which is too often forgotten by preachers.

3. Confer the profound reflexions of R. SCHERER, in *Gülden-Scherer*, 45-60.

4. According to SCHURR, 185, this is the real cause of the crisis our preaching is facing today.

party. If it does not evoke such a reaction, it runs the risk of eventually losing its intelligibility.

It is also interesting to recall that the concept of a congregation silently listening to a sermon — a situation readily acceptable to us — would have been utterly foreign to the mind of the early Church. The applause and critical reaction of the congregation, provided it was done in an orderly manner, was for her, something perfectly normal.<sup>1</sup>

Even when the congregations were reduced to absolute silence, homiletics still esteemed as valid the principle which obliged the preacher to make sure that his word issuing from the pulpit got through to the people « down below. »<sup>2</sup> To use Père Charles' way of putting it : Don't make the foot fit the shoe ; make the shoe fit the foot, even if it is a deformed one.<sup>3</sup>

That we are willing to let our congregations speak up, is a healthy sign for our times. A sensible preacher will always be able to draw profit from their suggestions, even when for good reasons, he should disregard some of them. The results of the inquiry held in connection with the second session of German homiletics professors will be especially valuable to him, conducted as it was, with an effort to reduce the source of the errors mentioned above.

## I. SUGGESTIONS OFFERED TO PREACHERS BY THEIR HEARERS

The director of the session,<sup>4</sup> in collaboration with its secretariat,<sup>5</sup> had selected in all, ten people (five men and five women) representing different social and age groups. They represented the following groups : young men from the university level (18-25), workers, men of rural areas, the middle class ; young women (16-23), city women (mothers of upper middle class families), country women, women engaged in teaching. These ten representatives of our sermon audiences each spoke for fifteen minutes before a panel

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1. Confer A. STUIBER, *Art. Beifall: Reall. f. Ant. u. Chr.*, 2 (1954), 99-102.

2. It was in this spirit that Charles Borromeo in his well known directives on preaching advises the preacher to plant in the congregation someone who will listen to his sermon and later give him a criticism in private. Confer *Lumen Vitae*, 61 (1952), 219.

3. Charles, 563.

4. Prof. Heinz FLECKENSTEIN, Professor of pastoral theology on the Faculty of Theology, Würzburg.

5. O. WEHNER, Vice-President of the Würzburg Major Seminary Faculty and Rev. Michael FRICKEL, O.S.B. of the Abbey of Münsterschwarzach.

limited to professors of homiletics. They spoke not only of their own personal reactions to sermons, but also of the reactions of those in the group which they represented. They were in a position to do the latter thanks to the means put at their disposal during the preparation of their reports.

The members of the session were all convinced that this method had lived up to their expectations. This was due especially to the adroitness of the secretariat in its choice of reporting subjects.<sup>1</sup> The suggestions for preachers which came out in the course of the ten fifteen minute periods, and the way in which they were offered, were a perfect example of both the frankness and the respect which a phenomenon like preaching deserves, a phenomenon in which the natural and supernatural are intermeshed.

Anyone who might have entertained the fear that laymen chosen in this way would express exaggerated and utopian ideas on the subject of preaching, would have been surprised by the realism of the suggestions they proposed. In addition, no one detected the slightest trace of any anticlerical resentment.

The following résumé of suggestions offered at Würzburg is only a provisional summary based on the findings of the inquiry. Later this year the full proceedings<sup>2</sup> of the symposium will appear, containing the text of the ten reports and the discussions which grew out of them along with the basic studies on the psychology and theology of the hearing of the Word, upon which the exchange with these representatives was based. The following summary will be presented in the form of two series of seven brief and pointed suggestions addressed to preachers. The first series has to do with the extrinsic form of the sermon ; the second, with the content of the sermon.

It is to be noted that the enunciation of the requests has been formulated by the author of this article and not by the subjects themselves. He has tried, however, to make these fourteen suggestions a perfect echo of all that was said at Würzburg.

A commentary on the requests thus summarized will be the matter of the rest of this article. In the footnotes of the following pages, reference will occasionally be made to the close correspondence of the reaction of these German subjects to that observed

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1. Only afterwards was it realized that this method had been used in the same way by the session on preaching at Montpellier in 1954. Confer the report, pp. 135-159.

2. These proceedings will be the second volume in a series, the first of which is entitled *Theologie und Predigt*, 1958, Würzburg, Domerschulstr. 18.



elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> This similarity makes the fourteen requests of the German subjects that much more worthy of our respect.

### 1. Suggestions as to form.

1. Take your time in carefully working out your sermon. You are mistaken if you think we can't pick this out.<sup>2</sup>

2. Please confine your preaching to a quarter of an hour. Nothing is gained by going beyond that limit.

3. No matter how erudite it may seem to you, avoid using Latin, foreign words, or abstract terms, when you speak to us; we grasp and retain only what we receive in the form of concrete images.

4. Don't speak the «language of Canaan<sup>3</sup>» at us, a thing which no one understands but you. Don't try to be modern at any price. Speak the language of our day, a vernacular which is concise, clear, free of all poetry and sentimentalism. When you speak to us about our world of work, be exact.

5. Avoid at all cost anything that might be high-flown; this only seems shallow to us.<sup>4</sup>

1. We make reference especially to the following material: for FRANCE: the proceedings of the *Congrès national de l'Union des Œuvres catholiques de France* of 1954 which took place in Montpellier and which had as its theme: *The Priest, Minister of the Word*, Paris, 1955; for ITALY: the proceedings of the *Settimana Nazionale di aggiornamento pastorale*, which was organized in Rome in 1956 by the *Centro di Orientamento pastorale*, having as its theme: *The Word of God in the Christian Community*; for ENGLAND and IRELAND: the symposium entitled *Preaching*, edited by J. M. Feehan, containing the article signed *Silens*, to which we made reference above, along with a commentary on it by four English or Irish laymen plus Feehan; for HOLLAND: the enlightening article of H. M. M. FORTMANN, *Crisis der Prediking. Een poging tot richting-bepaling voor de eigentijdse prediking, met bijzondere aandacht voor de rijpere jeugd*, in *Dux*, 23 (1956), pp. 113-128 (= Fortmann).

2. The English observers state that it is not rare that one experiences the stages in the composition of the sermon (Feehan, p. 37) and point out with insistence that a most elementary politeness towards the congregation obliges us to make a careful preparation.

3. This expression comes from the current Protestant discussion about preaching.

4. We would like to add here the following remarks addressed to young preachers, for whom pathos does not generally constitute a danger: "When you again learn how to make real contact with us, don't speak as though you were in a sitting room. Your conversional approach doesn't help much if we have difficulty hearing you. What would Communists do with such ready-made audiences? One thing is absolutely certain. They would make quite sure to get their message across. There would never be any inaudible mumbling from them. I can never understand why this aspect of preaching is so neglected, for surely it is an elementary truth that a message must reach the ears before it can stir the heart." (Feehan, p. 64).

6. *See to it that the message of your sermon is clear and easy to hold on to ; if it isn't, we will have forgotten it by the time we reach the church door.*

7. *Don't act as if you had already arrived at perfection. We are more inclined to take the word of a man who admits that he himself is looking for solutions, experiences suffering, and is himself a sinner. Betray a real appreciation for the everyday difficulties that a Christian layman has to experience.*

## 2. *Suggestions as to content.*

8. *Give us the substantial bread of the Word of God. We are hungry for it (perhaps more so than the generations before us). We're looking for bread and not cake.*

9. *Enlarge our concept of God and give us a rich insight into the Mystery of our Redemption.*

10. *Presume a minimal knowledge on the part of your hearers ; if you don't, you run the risk of going right over their heads.<sup>1</sup>*

11. *Show us how to make the truths of our faith cast their radiant warmth on our professional and work-a-day lives. We are distressed to hear the word « vocation » on your lips always in the context of the priesthood or religious state. Speak politics to us only in so far as it is related to your message (and it is fundamentally related to it) ; but don't speak party politics, and do not speak politics only on the eve of an election.*

12. *Put the blame squarely on those who deserve it ; but don't indulge in name calling, and never fly into a rage in the pulpit. This only produces the obduracy of the guilty, a pharisaical joy in the hypocrite, and the offense of those who are not really at fault. We all know that we are not what we should be (and this goes for you too, since you are human), but we don't like being called*

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1. "One day," writes Père Charles (p. 574), "after a sermon in which the Fathers of the Church had come on and off stage a few times like supporting actors in a play. I conducted a little investigation of my own. 'Who are these Fathers of the Church, whom our pastor seems to be hearing from regularly?' The responses were disarming. Some thought they were nearby pastors; others were of the opinion that (these are actually their words) they were the dead in the cemetery. One of them, who had studied his classics in a Catholic high school, assured me that the Fathers of the Church were the churchwardens. The last one I spoke to, told me with complete confidence, that they were the Redemptorists, 'those good Fathers who had come to give the parish mission.' — However many be the reasons why a preacher should never presume too much of his hearers, there is one consoling supposition he should never forget; namely, that his hearers do have the Holy Spirit (which does not mean that they have been lifted to the level of speculative theology, but, indeed, to the level of faith)."

*names. We would like to feel that despite our failings, our dignity as Baptized will be respected.*

13. *Make us feel, once in a while, that we belong to a Church which is, in fact, universal.*

14. *Don't add to our misery; instead, encourage us. Give us some consolation, hope, and confidence. Open up to us the joy of God, and help us to rejoice at the marvelous things He has worked on our behalf.*

## II. COMMENTARY

### 1. *Suggestions as to form.*

When we review the suggestions that concern form, we are struck by the fact that they simply repeat the ideals that sound homiletics has always upheld. And yet none of the subjects of the inquiry ever picked up a manual or textbook of homiletics.

There were only two points which were dictated by the pressures of our times. The unanimous demand to limit the sermon to a quarter of an hour (2)<sup>1</sup> reflects an age that is restless and constantly being talked at. The fifteen minute sermon should replace the half-hour sermon of the nineteenth century<sup>2</sup> and the «sermon hour» of the centuries before that,<sup>3</sup> unless we want to hurt our own preaching efficacy.

There was the equally unanimous request for a vocabulary which is restrained, simple, and unpretentious. (4, 5)<sup>4</sup> This desire has its counterpart in a current mentality which, in turn, is reflected in contemporaneous architecture. It is doubly understandable in a generation which has had to endure, in the realm of politics, so much futile pathos and so many empty delusions.

It is especially significant that even women are looking for restraint in the parlance of our sermons. The following sentence,

1. The English representatives reported that laymen generally felt the sermon should not go beyond ten minutes (Feehan, 53); French congregations likewise asked that sermons be confined to ten or fifteen minutes. (Confer Montpellier, 1954, 38).

2. Confer Joseph JUNGSMANN, *Theorie der geistlichen Beredsamkeit* (The Theory of Pulpit Eloquence), Freiburg, 1908, p. 335: "Make sure your ordinary Sunday morning sermons are short of a half-hour."

3. Confer R. CRUEL, *Geschichte der deutschen Predigt im Mittelalter*, Detmold, 1879, p. 635.

4. At Montpellier, a French layman said: "Grandiose style, tirades, imposing gestures, and all that smacks of grandiloquence, give us apprehension." (Montpellier, 1954, 153).

written by a woman, sums up the sentiments of all the women in our present day congregations : « We expect to get from the pulpit a lesson which abounds in meaning ; one which is clear, reserved, well organized, and solid in what it has to offer concerning the simple everyday truths of our religion. »

The other suggestions bear upon fundamental ingredients of the homily. The simple truth, for example, that images are necessary to hold on to the message of the sermon (3), is one of the basic principles of rhetoric — one that is older than Christianity itself (which does not mean that preachers always practised it). Its value was recognized as far back as the Roman rhetorician, Quintilian, who stated that the orator should express his ideas in a way that enables his listener actually to see them (*ita ut cerni videantur*).<sup>1</sup> How much more does it apply to the messengers of Him of Whom it is written : « He did not speak to them except in parables » (Mt. XII, 34). The greatest German professor of homiletics, Johann Michael Sailer, gives this advice to the young preacher : « Every abstract idea you present without an image is for your listeners nothing but a dense cloud which envelops them but from which no light strikes their minds. »<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the « easy to remember » quality of a sermon (6) is also — along with clarity upon which it depends — an aspect of our preaching which our hearers especially insisted on. The women who represented the mothers of city families said : « We mothers desire and expect the priest to make a résumé of the sermon for us ; to reduce it to a single idea, a word, a sentence, an image, which we can carry out of church with us and which will give us the courage to go back to our everyday lives ; one which will nourish our souls throughout the week. » Particularly a woman with a strong religious sense has need of an « easy to remember » form of preaching. In her monotonous daily life, she has, relatively speaking, a great deal of time to think.

One can gather from these shrewd observers the direction which our preaching should take nowadays. Instead of trying to handle always a whole pericope in a sermon, we should rather devote our time to developing a single biblical verse. On the other hand one must beware of an essay style which professes to be up-to-date and which is employed in certain pulpits today. Out of an understandable aversion for the « first... secondly... thirdly... » approach of the writers of an earlier generation, the essayist school falls into the

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1. QUINTILIAN, *Inst. orat.*, VIII, 3.

2. J. M. SAILER, *Neue Beiträge zur Bildung der Geistlichen* = Ges. Werke (Widmer'sche Ausgabe) 19 (Sulzbach, 1839), p. 64.



opposite extreme of resorting to aphorisms. The means of getting clarity in a sermon will vary with the times; clarity itself (and with it, a certain facility in permitting others to repeat the ideas expressed) is a perennial requirement of preaching.

What our congregations of the second half of the twentieth century are now saying both about over-solemnity and over-simplicity (that is banality) of the language of the preachers (4),<sup>1</sup> was said by St. Augustine, in his own way, fifteen hundred years before them, in the oldest manual of Christian homiletics, the fourth book of his *De Doctrina Christiana*. He urges the preacher to take a middle ground between a too elaborate style (ill-suited to establish contact with the congregation) and a form of preaching which, instead of appearing in splendor, displays itself in rags.<sup>2</sup>

He knows very well that he is simply defending a fundamental principle of human intercourse. In borrowing a formula from Cicero, he sums up his own thought by stating that a discourse given in public should betray a « calculated carelessness. »<sup>3</sup> Christian preaching, whose task is to proclaim the Good News to the poor, ought to observe this principle all the more. Wherever it can, it will use a colloquial instead of an erudite expression: « *Non sic dicatur ut a doctis, sed potius ut ab indoctis solet* »<sup>4</sup> — this is certainly a golden rule. Such a rule is more applicable to our preachers, who have spent twelve semesters studying dogma, than it was for the young preachers to whom St. Augustine addressed himself. One has only to compare a few of St. Augustine's sermons with his erudite theological treatises to realize how hard the Doctor of the Church of Hippo struggled throughout his life to arrive at a preaching style that was simple, forceful, and at the people's level.<sup>5</sup>

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1. A layman at Montpellier had this to say: "Verbal sentimentalism, lyrical flights, grandiloquent rhetoric, all seem so useless to me." The tendency of trying to be modern at any price is also frowned on elsewhere as it is among our German congregations: "We need, above all, that light which will break through our darkness; we need what will lift our hearts toward God. You accomplish nothing when you use a slovenly, audacious, or trite manner of speaking. This is the kind of talk we meet too often in our daily life. We put up with it in others. The very fact that we find such talk out of place on your lips and incompatible with your divine mission, is a sign of the earnestness with which we listen to you and of the respect we feel toward you." (Feehan, 68). Someone had also said at Würzburg: "We don't expect from you, what we find anywhere else."

2. « Sic detrahit ornatum ut sordes non contrahat. » AUGUSTINUS, *De Doctr. christ.*, IV, 10, 24: Flor. Patr., 24 (Bonn, 1930), p. 82.

3. Ibid. where he makes reference to CICERO, *Orator*, p. 78.

4. Ibid.

5. Confer F. VAN DER MEER, *Augustinus der Seelsorger*, Köln, 1951, p. 491.

St. Augustine, the preacher, has met another wish of modern congregations. Although they want the preacher to shake them out of their false complacency, they want, at the same time, to see in him a man who has been deeply moved by the Word of God,<sup>1</sup> one who is as fearful of the judgment it contains as they are.<sup>2</sup> The sermons of St. Augustine are permeated with an attitude that regards his hearers not as subordinates but as « fellow disciples. » This attitude is betrayed by one of his favorite formulas: « (*Christus*) *in cuius schola omnes condiscipuli sumus* » (Christ in Whose school we are all follow disciples).<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Suggestions as to content.

We noted earlier that the suggestions as to form, simply called for attitudes always required from a good sermon. The same is to be said of the suggestions regarding content; but, in this realm, the unanimity is even more marked — and consoling.

Form the extrinsic form of the sermon, a preacher can always count on certain basic human reactions which remain constant despite the « ups and downs » of cultural trends. In the area of content, however, one might fear that an age, which is supposedly becoming more and more materialistic, would be rather uneasy before our message. Just the contrary is true (and this does not go for German congregations alone).<sup>4</sup> An obvious hunger for what is proper and essential to the Christian religion is making itself felt at the foot of our pulpits. (8, 9) Our people are not interested in any and every pious talk that happens to come along. They are looking for a form of preaching which actually gives witness to

1. Confer RIES, 113. Italian hearers also give humility first place when he lists the qualities most desired in a preacher. He should address his congregation in a "tono fraterno" (Rome, 1956, p. 136). "The preacher ought to avoid any appearance of disassociating himself from his audience" (Schurr, p. 189).

2. Confer Sermo 125, 8 *In Ioan.* P.L., 38, 694: *Frafterne moneo: Deus iubet et ego commoneo, quia commoneor.*

3. Confer *Enarrationes in Psalmos*: 34, 1 (*Corpus Christianorum*, Ser. Lat., 38, 299).

4. The reaction of the laymen at Montpellier, for example, could be summed up in this way: We are waiting to hear the Word of God, we await it as a nourishment. A priest delegate said, in his turn: They are looking for someone to teach them Jesus Christ (Montpellier, 1954, 157). Dutch youth want one thing from their preacher above all else. No matter how important other considerations may be, they want their preacher "to give witness to the salvation which has come" (Fortmann). Amidst the English reports, this statement is found: "The people beg the preacher to give them divine truth; in so much of the preaching, alas, they receive stones instead of bread" (Feehan, 68).

the message of the Gospel and to the wonders God is working in our midst.<sup>1</sup> This is the mission which has belonged to preaching ever since biblical times and which has so often been lost sight of in the course of time.

All those requests which the reporting subjects made with regard to the way we should handle morality (12) or politics (11) in the pulpit, correspond exactly to the preaching ethos that is conserved for us in the Bible, especially in the writings of St. Paul. This biblical ethos knows the moral imperative well, but all its imperatives spring — as O. Cillmann points out<sup>2</sup> — from the indicative : because you become light by your baptism, the darkness should exercise no power over you.

It is a healthy sign, too, that those who make up our congregations admit a strong dislike for « moralising » sermons which are not in a gospel spirit, and that they admit they derive little profit from such sermons. None of the subjects of the Würzburg inquiry were foolish enough to reject the concept of admonition as such. All were aware and some even expressly stated, that such an attitude would be equally « non-evangelical. » But among the ten reports presented, a plea made itself heard and was expressed in a formula which should constantly ring in the ears of certain preachers : « We don't like being called names ! » (12)

The men and women who make up our congregations live in a world that is becoming smaller and smaller every day. As a result they are more open to the needs of the missions. We should not, then, turn a deaf ear when they point out another fundamental aspect of Christian preaching : « Make us feel once in a while that we belong to a Church which is, in fact, universal ! » (13)<sup>3</sup> Anyone who might not have appreciated the preaching task (so neglected till now) which remains to be done in this field, would soon do so if he could see the promising results which were obtained in Germany through the « Misereor » drives in 1959 and 1960.

The most pressing of all the requests made at Würzburg, was for a form of preaching that brought comfort, solace and encouragement. (14) Here more than in all the rest, the subjects were simply seeking an element essential to Christian preaching, which is, of its nature, not a message of threat (*Drohbotschaft*) but a proc-

1. Confer SCHURR, p. 192.

2. O. CULLMANN, *Christus und die Zeit*, Zürich, 1948, p. 199.

3. English audiences also complain of a loss of "catholic" or universal perspective when this dimension is neglected in sermons. (Feehan, p. 35).

lamation of the Good News (*Frohbotschaft*) of salvation which has come to each of us in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Psychologically speaking, we can appreciate the situation of a pastor today, who, after many a disappointing pastoral experience during the week, climbs into the pulpit on Sunday and unburdens his heart by wailing the same old lament over the evil times through which we are passing — times which are getting progressively worse ! But ought we not to question the good such laments produce — no matter how much personal consolation they may afford the preacher ?<sup>2</sup> Are they not calculated simply to create in the people who listen to them, the defeatist attitude of belonging only to a lost mass of humanity ? Christian preaching, even when confronted with an apparently hopeless situation, has, as its fundamental and essential mission, the task of producing precisely the opposite mentality.<sup>3</sup>

This task of bringing hope to souls through our sermons, is of such prime importance that the sermon can, on occasion, pass over its function of exhorting the people to fulfil their obligations. One of the most beautiful expressions of this same idea to appear in our day issued from the pen of a layman. It can be found in the book of Otilie Mosshammer, entitled *Priester und Frau* (The Priest and Women). The passage has to do with the women in the congregation but is equally applicable to all. « It is not theatrical indignation, a lot of shouting, and accusations that women are looking for ; what they need above all is encouragement for new undertakings, peace, and a bit of humor even in the midst of the most serious truths. The preacher should not feel he always has to move people to action. He has already accomplished a great deal if he can get his hearers, who are today so besieged on all sides, to find some repose in divine truth ; if he can get them to lift their ever drooping brows up towards the Savior. »<sup>4</sup>

The voice of the congregation which has been heard especially in this résumé of, and commentary on the suggestions expressed at Würzburg, is no longer the voice of the « lamb » of the past which always said « yes » and « amen » to everything. The frank and intelligent criticism made by those laymen at Würzburg can be highly instructive for us preachers ; it shows us how much our present day preaching leaves to be desired.

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1. Confer SCHURR, p. 206.

2. Confer what was said in the *Trierer Theol. Zeitschr.* apropos of the theme : the evolution of eucharistic piety and defeatism in the pulpit (1957), p. 176.

3. Confer the grotesque examples given in GRÜN (1959, p. 264).

4. O. MOSSHAMMER, *Priester und Frau*, Freiburg, 1958, p. 228.



Anyone who could have detected the multiple tones in that voice (which often did not come out until the informal interviews), would have come to an amazing and consoling conclusion ; one, which does not concern German congregations alone,<sup>1</sup> and it is this : despite the criticism which was raised, our congregations have a new and almost ardent understanding and appreciation of preaching. This conclusion should lead us to another one. Would it not be a good idea for preachers and homiletics professors to revive the old tradition<sup>2</sup> of meeting occasionally with their confreres from all over the country, in order to work out together what they can do to distribute from their pulpits, in a more effective way than they have up to now, the bread of God's Word ? Our people have a great hunger for this bread — a hunger which has been aroused by the Spirit.

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1. At Montpellier, the eminent French layman, J. P. Dubois-Dumée, editor-in-chief of the periodical *Informations catholiques internationales*, said in his report summing up the criticism made by congregations : "What struck me as I analyzed the results of the inquiry, was not the rebellion or disgust, still less, the indifference. If you are looking for an over-all picture, it was the sympathetic understanding which predominated." (Montpellier, 1954, p. 22).

2. The courses in homiletics given in Ravensburg (1913) were attended by 500 priests ; those in Munich (1927) by 775. Confer SCHURR, p. 197, where the same suggestion for the revival of this tradition can be found.

# Towards a Genuine Moral Sense

by Robert BLOMME

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« Paddle your own canoe. » This well-known maxim, a certain schoolmaster used to love repeating to his boys. He thus evoked afresh, in the mind of each of them, the idea of human maturity towards which all were most earnestly striving. Man is, indeed, responsible for his own destiny ; on him depends the value of his existence. Every one of us is essentially a « self-made man » ; each of us decides his own destiny in the depths of his own conscience. It is easy to understand, therefore, why so much importance has always been attached to the training of conscience. Nowadays, however, a genuine and mature moral sense is more than ever indispensable to a Christian.

## *An Urgent Pastoral Task.*

In the past, the social environment of city and parish exercised a much more definite influence than nowadays. Many people were perfectly happy just to let themselves be carried along by this environmental influence. Public opinion guided them in their choices and decisions ; generally accepted behaviour or the criticism of neighbours kept them up to standard in their daily conduct ; their consciences were inspired by what others said.

In these days, however, people are spending their lives more and more in huge tentacular towns, « in the heart of the masses. » They are drawn from all over the world by our civilization and

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crowd together in towns. There they work and there they settle and promptly lose their individuality. In a village, even those inhabitants who live furthest apart are not strangers to one another, whereas, in a block of flats, people are quite satisfied with merely knowing their neighbours on the same landing by name and have no desire for closer acquaintance. Nothing on earth, moreover, would make them want to meddle with other people's business : each leads his own life just as he thinks fit.

Does that mean that our contemporaries are not subject to any social pressure ? Quite the contrary ! Means of diffusion have never been so powerful or so subtle. Press, radio and cinema are so many instruments for shaping public opinion ; but, in the process, they magnify on a gigantic scale, the ideological opposition inherent in the modern intermingling of the masses. Moral-social values within a self-contained society are practically unanimous. Anyone can refer to them with full assurance and thus avoid being continually obliged to choose between several different, even contradictory, solutions. But in the present-day crowding together of the masses, many of our contemporaries are constantly coming up against behaviour patterns and ways of living that are alien to them. Thus it happens, that in our countries where civilization is based on Christianity, the atmosphere has been changed by other great currents of thought which have seeped in. Heterogeneous views of life are juxtaposed within our social groups. All the means of diffusion are turned to account in setting them before the man of today with the result that, when he decides to do something, he finds himself straightway beset by several ideals. If he asks himself : « Which line ought I to take ? », he has only too many criteria from which to choose.

So there he is, morally torn in every direction and faced with an increasingly complicated situation. Modern science is fast changing the conditions in which we live, new channels of activity are being constantly opened up before us, and others are foreshadowed as possibilities for the future. These advances in scientific achievement, however, call for greater spiritual development on our part. These things are, in themselves, often enough morally indifferent, becoming good or bad according to the intention we have in using them. On the other hand, the new world they are creating, appears to us under many hitherto unknown aspects and sets before us, more and more as individuals, problems which we used to deal with collectively. Therefore, the man who intends to make his way through such a world, must be capable of making fresh decisions : to be master of the situation, he must take the trouble to discover the appropriate attitudes.

It would be mere self-deception, then, to think of helping the modern Christian by giving him a few rules of thumb or suggesting a few stereotyped ways of acting. He must be given the wherewithal to react personally to every circumstance of his life and, in each of them, he must be capable of finding out for himself the line he must take as a Christian. The task devolving on schoolmasters and clergy of developing in him a sound moral sense, is clearly an urgent one.

### *The Development of the Moral sense.*

« Having a sense of something » is to have a spontaneous understanding of a certain order of things. The man with a sense of humour can see the funny side of any situation he may be in, and react to it with infectious laughter.

To train someone's moral sense is to develop in him the faculty by which he immediately perceives the moral worth of his actions.

Therefore, it cannot be merely a matter of getting him, from time to time, to make a valid moral judgment : it is rather, a matter of helping him to acquire a real *power* of appreciation and discernment. He must become capable of recognizing, concretely, both the good and the bad in all he does.

We must not think that this awareness is the result of prolonged speculative consideration or that it is mere abstract knowledge. It consists in an *immediate and spontaneous* reaction proceeding from the whole person. It is a vivid experience of moral worth engaging the whole man ; he apprehends it directly through, as it were, a natural bias towards goodness. A man thus becomes capable of seeing and feeling very keenly, in every concrete situation, the course he should follow ; just as through daily experience of nature, the peasant is able to forecast the weather. In addition, *taking up an initial attitude* is included in this awareness of the course to be followed, since a real grasp of moral values implies both the perception of what is demanded and the decision to carry it out.

Developing a moral sense of this kind is, therefore, a long-term and many-sided undertaking in which, obviously, one might easily go astray or fall short in many ways. It is important, therefore, that the moral sense eventually developed should be thoroughly genuine.

### *An Adult Moral Sense.*

If this capacity for discernment and appreciation is to be mature and genuine, two things are required simultaneously : in any given situation, a man must be able to sense the different moral values



involved while, at the same time, being alive to the full significance of the action he is about to perform.

A man's moral sense must lead him on to the moral order and give him a spontaneous and thorough grasp of it. It must help him, not only to decide what is to be done, what avoided, but also, to realize the significance of his choice and all that it implies. The *moral sense*, fully developed, *makes us so sensitive* to moral behaviour that we *grasp its full bearing*. The power of making a moral decision in every concrete situation implies an aptitude for understanding the full extent of the choice made and all that it involves. Only then can we say with truth that a man is «self-made» as a responsible being.

That is why the education of a true moral sense requires, in a special way, two converging lines of approach. First of all, the man may be familiarized with the Christian ideal, have it put before him in all its fulness and in a way that is adapted to his needs. Thus he will be furnished with the criteria by which to be guided in his action. There is, however, something more that we must be sure of doing, something which goes deeper still : this is to bring him to see all that is involved in the judgement he makes. Then he will be able to deal with every situation in his life according to points of view which are really worthy of an adult. With this in mind, therefore, we are going to describe the significance and foundation of the moral judgement.



*Let us begin, then, from moral experience by taking a Christian faced with a given situation and try and see how he will tackle it as a responsible being. The dominant characteristics of a really moral sense will gradually emerge as we go along.*

#### *A Positive Attitude.*

First of all, what will be his preliminary attitude to the situation ? Often enough, it comes down to : « What am I to avoid so as not to commit sin ? » If he is more astute, it will even sometimes be : « How far can I go without committing mortal sin ? »

This way of acting is fairly common. Sin is, no doubt, the most deeply felt moral experience ; the one, in fact, that we study most in view of confession. Nevertheless, this way of looking upon the action to be taken distorts the view. The one question that must spring to mind at this moment is a positive one : « What shall I do to make a success of my life ? »

Christian morality teaches us what we should do, not in order to avoid sin, but to make a successful issue of our lives. Conjugal morality, for instance, is not a collection of restrictions for stifling love, but the way to the fulfilment of married life, an invitation to develop personality through great love. And all the time, the question that should rise to the lips of husband and wife should be : « What shall we do to increase our mutual love ? »

Thus we come to the first characteristic of a real moral sense : it must work in a positive direction. The moral objective contains all we need to evoke our enthusiasm, it answers to the real « passion to live » implanted in each one of us. The moral sense, that power of discernment, is the faculty that is found at the very heart of a man's efforts to be a man in the fullest sense of the word.

### *A Sense of Dialogue.*

But, making a success of one's life, developing oneself to the full, that must surely be proudly worshipping self, or withdrawing into oneself like an adolescent. Far from it ! An immeasurably greater reality is implicit in every moral action.

The question : « How am I to make a success of my life ? » leads on to the discovery of a value and of the command inherent in it : « I must behave in this way... »

But what lies behind this moral command, this law or this commandment ? Behind the law, there is always the lawgiver. Behind the commandment, there is always God. That is why, when David confessed his sin, he began by saying : « Against thee, against thee alone have I sinned. I have done evil in thy sight. » A moral command exists only because someone issues a command and that someone is God, our God, the God Who calls us.

The God of the Christian is not the God of the philosophers ; He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Who has entered into the history of mankind and makes His way into the life of each one of us. He calls us, and He calls every one of us by name. He is not satisfied with speaking to us from afar, coldly and impersonally. What He proposes to us is to share His life, to become His sons, brothers of Christ inspired by His Spirit. In this respect, He expects a definite response from each one of us ; His call is a vocation.

This high calling is therefore a far cry from the proud worship of self, anxious only to make a success of one's own little life ; a far cry from the adolescent's ambition to become a « smart fellow » in spite of anything and everything. Making a success of my life means, opening my heart to God, to His call, and answering it.

Making a success of my life, means accepting the common destiny that He places before me. Answering His call, means that I must commit myself wholly and entirely : mere lip service will not do ; there must be total commitment, a response that makes a complete change in my way of acting. My answer lies in living the kind of life that God Himself lives. I am myself the answer : I must answer, not by mere words but by what I am.

Thus, in the depths of religious experience, the moral life is lived as a dialogue ; and at the heart of this dialogue stands Christ. Through Him we are called by God, Our Father ; through Him we are enabled to answer. He is the mediator Who makes this dialogue possible, and He is much more than that. Christ is, in fact, the final call, the eternal Word addressed to us by God : in Him, the Father's plan is revealed in its totality. He is, likewise, the model we must ever imitate : through being incorporated in Him our response will ring true. « Per ipsum et cum ipso et in ipso, gratias agimus Patri Deo omnipotenti in unitate Sancti Spiritus » : through Him, with Him, and in Him, we give back to God the Father, all the graces He has bestowed on us.

Having a moral sense, therefore, implies that we are fully aware of this *dialogue structure of our existence*. We must realize that we are answering the call of God : it is the Lord Who speaks in our conscience. When we have understood this, the first question of all moral experience is changed into : « What does God expect from me ?... How am I to imitate Christ here and now ? »

If we are to hear God's call and answer it, we must make a twofold effort. In the first place, we must be *attentive*, for then God will be able to make known His call to us, show us how He is calling us. We shall learn to discern this divine call first of all within ourselves, for it is written within us, as it were in outline ; it is the natural law. But we must also hear it from the very mouth of God : the decalogue, the ten commandments, are words addressed to us by God, precise messages which He transmits to us. Only, we must take care not to stop short at the letter of these divine commandments. Since we are holding a dialogue with God, we must always look for His secret and perfect will hidden in the expression of His wishes. Christ has taught us to discover, behind the commandments in their literal sense, the Father's real intention. And this ultimate and perfect will of God constitutes a call to unlimited moral progress. It is unbecoming of a Christian to be satisfied with merely fulfilling his duty : it behoves him to do ever more and better. On entering into a dialogue with God, we are established in a new relationship, that of a son towards his Father. This relationship originates in limitless love, calling for an equivalent

response : « Be ye therefore perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect. »

From this, we can easily see that this effort of attention implies a certain « inventiveness » on our part. We have to be attentive, but also, « *inventive* » with God : we must find out with Him what we should do in every actual circumstance. Just as the bridegroom does not offer his bride a life together in which every detail is regulated in advance, so neither does God offer us a life with Him that is ready-made, prefabricated : we have to build it with Him. In the law, we have heard the echo of God's infinite call, but we have to find out how it applies to every moment of our lives. Though I know that I must love my parents, I have still to find out how to show best this filial love in the present circumstance.

Thus it is that, in prayer alone, can we obtain a truly genuine moral sense. In prayer we take a place, our place, in the life of the Trinity and through this familiar intercourse with God, we become increasingly capable of fulfilling what He asks of us. In prayer, we shall learn to enter into the mind of God, to see the world and things as He sees them. Thus, little by little, we shall be able to forge within us that conscience of the son, which must be ours. Gradually, the Holy Ghost will fill us, in prayer, with His fulness : will enlighten us as to our very existence, our home and our profession ; He will make of us believers who are capable, in a certain sense, of living over again the experience of the prophets.

### *The Sense of Others.*

Christ's purpose in calling us is to unite all men together in Himself. God invites us to become His sons, brothers of Christ, but in doing so, He gives us to one another as brothers. The call of God requires of us to take others into consideration, become responsible for them : « The Christian is one to whom God has entrusted others. »

« If anyone says that he loves God, and hates his brother, that man is a liar. He who does not love the brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he does not see ? » In my conscience, then, I hear the Lord's call but, within that call, I hear the voice of my fellow men. A fully developed moral sense, therefore, also requires a keen sense of consideration of others and of our responsibilities towards them. And thus, the initial question produces a second : « What is required of me by God, by others ? »

There are practical consequences attached to setting out the problem in this way. It can be of use in finding the solution to certain difficulties, especially at the adolescent stage. It indeed may happen that some young people are in an agony of apprehension



of a certain kind of sin. Their whole attention is fastened on the one subject. They get so shut in on themselves and so worked up that, eventually, they commit the sin and risk falling into dangerous discouragement. At such a moment, to make them feel for others and draw them out of themselves towards others, may very often be the means of helping them to make the first step towards freedom.

### *The Sense of Growth.*

If, in truth, moral life is aroused by a call from God, a call without any limits, this call requires from us, as we have seen, a corresponding answer, an answer that can never be final. Moreover, as it is we ourselves who are this answer, we shall have to be ever changing, always improving.

Thus, the moral life is one of perpetual growth : man is constantly on the way towards fulfilment and completion. In all his activity he is striving to become, in reality, what actually he is only virtually. Each of his actions is a step, a leap forward. It is, nevertheless, in absolute freedom that the human person goes on developing in this way : he creates himself step by step, but on his own responsibility. Each of his actions is a real « self-making. »

At the heart of this deliberate growth, then, we must once more find this faculty of orientation in which the moral sense consists. This moral sense is the integrating part of this moral dynamism, helping on the work towards maturity and being a factor in this vital impulse. That is why man must learn not to judge statically in moral matters.

Moral life is a continual advance in which one must never grow weary, a tension that does not relax. But advancing means going forward step by step and therefore, man must be able to recognize the different stages of his journey. He must have the courage to undertake them one by one, telling himself that one degree of progress will lead on to many others. Having reached one stage, we see others which before we had considered beyond our powers, or we discover new ones of which we had never dreamed. A genuine moral sense, this faculty of developing the person, must both discern the stages and notice the new horizons. This is quite a different thing from indefinite repetition of certain stereotyped judgements.

### *A Person Incarnate.*

Action in man is, therefore, self-creation. In all his activity, he is aiming at full development with clear-sightedness and in all liberty. This is what gives importance to his intention and, beyond that, to the general orientation of his life. When man acts, he under-

takes a series of manifold and varied moves. All, however, form one whole, since they are inspired and unified by a powerful dynamism of which his intention is the driving force. For that reason, our moral judgement must, in the first place, be brought to bear on the intention : we have to be constantly purifying it.

Only, as soon as man brings all his human possibilities into play in his activity, it enters into the realm of exterior reality. His activity, carried over into external action, becomes a ferment in the world, it enters into the woof and weft of history. It transforms the world for better or for worse and, as the days pass by, extends its good or baneful influence through time. Man cannot, therefore, isolate himself in self-centred peace nor remain indifferent to the objective repercussions of his acts. It is not enough for him to start off with a good intention ; he must be conscious of the fact that his action flows out into the objective world, and he must desire to make « this world more beautiful, less hard, more fraternal. »

The moral sense, faculty of the human being, spirit-incarnate, must make us clear-sighted as regards all the effective extensions of human action. It must be made sensitive to the values, both of the immanent act and of the exterior operation. Christians have sometimes been reproached with preaching a « morality of the intention. » They do, indeed, owe it to themselves to be « doers » also. An adult moral sense must not bear one-sidedly on one element of human action, but embrace it in all its complexity. Our education should accustom Christians to take all this into consideration.



It has been said that what constitutes the greatness of an occupation is that it establishes bonds between men. What constitutes the greatness of man is not that he has relations with the divinity, but that he is in relationship with God. And all our links with others spring from within this fundamental relationship. « By order of God — a certain I — with others — in the world — for God, » such is man.

But this complete fulfilment must be sought after. To grow and to develop is a task that man must undertake freely. His whole life is propelled by a dynamism which he himself must direct to its goal.

The moral sense is a determining factor in this growth. That is why, in the phenomenon of conscience, once again we have met these characteristic marks of the call, the answer and the responsibility. We shall need to take all these into account in training those entrusted to us so that they become responsible beings.

# Parents and Family Prayer

by Pierre RANWEZ, S.J.

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One in Christ, husband and wife, form a unique spiritual unity. Their union is both the symbol of the Covenant and the framework within which it is realized. The Pauline text : « Husbands, love your wives as Christ has loved the Church... » (Eph. 5, 25) will ever remain the formal charter of their union. The married couple will be constantly renewed through a series of reciprocal relations, in the course of which Christ will be both given and received, and through a fecundity, which is, in part, that of the Church herself.

Catechetics and pastoral endeavors should take this situation into account.

Catechists and pastors of souls ought neither to instruct nor direct married people as though they were isolated individuals. When they have listened to the Word of God together, and prayed to understand its meaning better, a husband and wife should be able to comment on it to one another, and to live it out, in common, in their home. To mark out, on the contrary, a separate path of spirituality for each, to stress the progress of one party, without giving due attention to that of the partner, ends up in an impasse.

In most instances, the married couple are parents or future parents. Their interests and emotions are for the most part familial ones ; their very function in the Church is a familial one. They are the more attentive to the message of the Gospel, if it is presented to them as a message which must be handed over by them, in turn, to their children. They come to realize that they themselves must penetrate that message in order to transmit it with conviction.

The Church expects from parents more than just a submissive interest ; she wants of them a real collaboration. She wants them actually to make the spiritual journey with their children and effectively to assume their role as leaders of family worship.

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We would like to examine this last point in more detail.

It is by actually celebrating such family worship that laymen exercise, in a privileged manner, their « priesthood, » and it is from such worship that their spirituality will grow and bear fruit.

Three questions will occupy our attention :

- what is this family worship or family « liturgy » ?
- how should it express itself, especially, in the evening prayer ?
- how can variety be introduced into it in the course of the liturgical year ?

## I. WHAT IS FAMILY WORSHIP OR « LITURGY » ?

Its reality or right to exist is sometimes called into question. The individuals who make up a family, some will say, participate in the public cult of the liturgy ; they are invited to prolong this participation in their private prayer ; they can help each other, for example, by praying together as a family. This common enterprise, however, does not authorize us to speak of family cult as such.

It can be said by way of a reply, that if communities exist in the Church and have their own particular way of life, they should — as such — intensify their unity and restore their vitality through a communal contact with our Lord, under the direction of their superiors. It is precisely as such a cell within the Church, that the family ought to celebrate a worship which is proper to it. « Family prayer is not simply that of juxtaposed individuals, » wrote Father Carré,<sup>1</sup> « it is the praise of a redeemed familial community, a praise which is due God. Domestic cult has, then, in Christianity, its own distinctive personality. Under the father's authority, it will seek to rediscover its forms. »

This « family liturgy » will be distinct from the liturgy of the Church, though, at the same time, closely related to it. It will be the preparation for, and the echo of, the official liturgy ; but it will also be characterized by those elements which are the hallmarks of family reunions : spontaneity, liberty, flexibility. For just as the family-cell develops in the very heart of the Church, but with a certain autonomy of its own (as in the case of the parents' right to raise their children) ; so, the family « liturgy » is included in the prayer life of the Church, but in an analogous way, for it resembles the formal liturgy in many ways, and at the same time differs from it.

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1. *Deux sacrements, ordre et mariage*, in *Pastorale familiale*, Congrès de Rennes 1949, Paris, Union des Œuvres Catholiques de France, 1949, p. 37.



All « family liturgy » will be orientated towards the Eucharist and it will be in harmony with the feasts of the liturgical cycle. It will be the child's introduction to the liturgy, made at home ; and it will be a prolongation of the liturgy in the intimacy of the home.

## II. HOW FAMILY WORSHIP SHOULD EXPRESS ITSELF ESPECIALLY IN THE EVENING PRAYER

After the manner of strict liturgical worship, the family evening prayer should fulfil three functions :

— it should be the occasion of an instruction in, and commentary on, the Word of God ;

— it should offer the community the opportunity to express its love and praise of God and its confidence in Him ;

— it should be the means of strengthening the unity of the family-cell, in God's presence and by means of His grace.

*1. Family prayer should be the occasion  
of an instruction in, and commentary on,  
the Word of God.*

Parents manifest God to their children primarily through the witness of their lives. In addition to this, however, they should, by an occasional instruction, point up those elements which their way of life and action will have already suggested.

A chance encounter, a happy or unhappy experience, a reflection or a question posed by the child, will afford the father or mother the opportunity to correct a judgement or to open up some spiritual avenue of thought. Such casual instruction, however, runs the risk of being insufficient, unless it expresses itself in a privileged manner at regular intervals. As happens so often for want of a favorable opportunity, parents do not dare to say the important things they really want to teach their children ; as for the children — they want, more often than we imagine, to put certain questions to their parents, or confide to them certain reflections of their own ; but just when they feel like speaking up, Dad seems preoccupied with professional cares, or Mom with her household tasks... and the opportunity for dialogue is missed. Would not the time right after dinner, but before the actual evening prayer, be an ideal moment for father, mother, and children, to gather together to listen to the reading of a few verses of the Bible or a short passage from the life of a saint, and to make a brief commentary on it ? At such a

moment, father and mother could, in a simple and casual way, make a real spiritual contact with their children, and the latter — as experience has shown — would be only too happy to enter into a dialogue with their parents, brothers, and sisters.

Here, for example, is the experience of two young people :

«If there are days when we do not feel strongly inclined to go to family prayer (to which we are never obliged),» writes a young girl of nineteen, «we do welcome the period of common reflection. Our evening prayer is also an occasion for us to help one another; for, as so often happens, someone brings up a problem to which we each offer a solution, and, in this way, we all try to arrive at a sound conclusion.»

«These family vigils,» — we here cite the text of a sixteen year old boy, — «are the occasion, not only for making contact with the great personages of the Bible, but also for a fruitful exchange of ideas between brothers and sisters — an exchange which helps us to appreciate the point of view of an older or younger member of the family, and to get a clear concept of the current and past problems of the Church.»

And here are the reflections of some parents :

«After our prayer, if the children so desire, or if Dad or Mom think it necessary, a brief commentary highlights the more important points. These commentaries force the parents to reflect and they invite a lively interest on the part of the children.»

«After a short Gospel text has been read,» writes another couple, «each relates what this text has suggested to him. Often the text has already been the subject of someone's meditation, and in this case, we simply relate the form which our prayer, based on a particular text, took. Our prayer begins simply as a conversation between the four of us. Then, the father tries to establish a connection between the text meditated on and the life of the children; he also exposes the possible implications the text has for the life of the parents, as well as the difficulties we can all expect to meet in following the example of Christ's life... On Saturday evenings we devote our time to preparing the Mass of the following day. When the eldest of our children made his solemn communion, we prepared for it in a special way, along with him, during the period of our family prayer. What we did was to work out together a program that would cover about ten days. Each day was devoted to a different theme. During this time, the children themselves took turns in selecting those Gospel texts related to the themes given. In the course of each day they meditated on these texts and, in the evening, we discussed them. They found this form of prayer very appealing.»

«Ever so often,» writes still another father, «the religious reading matter is the occasion of a genuine spiritual dialogue. Once, when a passage describing the joy of being led by God was read, our eldest son asked us : 'How is God's Will manifested to us?' It seems clear that such exchanges can help the adolescent find his way.»

*2. Family prayer should offer the community  
the opportunity to express its love  
and praise of God and its confidence in Him.*

Each community, as such, within the Church ought, to express to God its love and adoration.

Family prayer normally should be in harmony with the reading which will have preceded it ; and it will also be its natural conclusion. Many are the attitudes of the Christian as he stands before God. He contrasts his poverty with God's grandeur and this is adoration ; he comes to realize in joy, God's glory and splendor, and this is praise ; he expresses to Him his acknowledgment of all this ; he calls Him to his aid ; he implores His pardon ; he offers himself to God and renders himself open to His Will. Family prayer must keep in mind the diversity of these attitudes. It is important, however, to avoid anything that would make it too heavy or tedious ; certainly, everything need not be expressed at once. One day, the prayer will take on the character of praise ; another day, it will be a plea for pardon. The change in the liturgical seasons will obviously introduce a certain variety, as we will see later. Likewise, the prayer will now be spoken, now sung ; it will occasionally leave room for silence. One phase of it can be spoken by the father, another by the mother, another by one of the children. At one time, recourse will be had to formulas, at another, to improvising.

Here are a few examples of what is actually being done by some families :

« The prayer in which we parents participate together with our four older youngsters does not take place every evening because our social obligations simply don't permit it, but it had two or three times a week. On the nights when we go out, the children are completely at liberty either to pray together or to pray privately... On certain feasts like Christmas, Candlemas, and Easter, for example, formal prayer is replaced by a small ceremony. Stress is to be put on the fact that it is the children themselves who must fully participate in these prayers, and that the parents are present only to guide, direct, and give example.

» For the past year, we have been devoting our Saturday evening prayer to one of the themes of the next day's Mass. Linking our family prayer in this way to that of the Church has permitted us more easily to bring our intentions into harmony with those of the Church. Our prayer on these occasions is along the lines of a litany. Then, we close with a hymn.

» After the reading and exchange of ideas, described above, the

children announce certain intentions and, together, we carry them before God according to a fixed formula, like the 'Our Father' or 'Hail Mary' and this is generally followed by the singing of the 'Salve Regina.' Experience has proved that the advantage of this type of prayer consists, above all, in demonstrating that prayer is simply a conversation with God. It was our intention to orientate our children quite gently towards prayer. There is a great deal said today about the prayer of laymen and this is something to be grateful for, but we rarely hear the subject of children's prayer discussed, and yet we are convinced that children take more easily to prayer than do adults. For them, it is something almost natural and the day they are asked to pray, they will, with God's grace, do it without effort. In the meantime, our children put great stock in that section of our evening prayers devoted to announcing the intentions, doubtless, because it is something more concrete and immediate to them. But even this gives us the chance to broaden our field of preoccupations and to get them interested in all the great problems of our times — and this from a spiritual point of view. »

### 3. *Family prayer should strengthen the unity of the family-cell in God's presence and through His grace.*

A friendship is born and develops through the exchanges which are made between the parties involved. It is the quality of these exchanges which will determine the level of the friendship. A banal or conventional encounter with another person scarcely leads to anything more than camaraderie. A mutual effort and display of generosity in the course of a difficult or perilous enterprise will actually seal a true friendship. The exchanges of confidence will knit strong and lasting ties. And yet, as so often is the case, the conversations between the spouses themselves, on the one hand, and between the parents and their children, on the other, remain banal. A lack of time, a certain human respect, and the absence of favorable opportunities, all help to explain why these exchanges rarely reach a profound depth ; why a solution to their most basic problems is not attempted ; and why the communion that should exist between hearts, remains on the far side of what is really to be desired.

In the charters of certain *communautés de foyers* (similar to the cells of the Christian Family Movement), this deficiency has been corrected through the institution of the « duty to stop and think, » that is to say, the duty of the married couple to put aside, at regular intervals, some free time to sit down and discuss, in God's presence, the important problems in their conjugal and family life. Their fulfilment of this requirement has been for many



a couple a liberation, and has provided the opportunity for a fresh start. Such an institution could readily be transposed to the family domain. A family which gathers together before God on sufficiently frequent occasions for an exchange and for prayer will see their unity assert itself and their affection for one another blossom forth in joy.

« These spiritual soirées, » writes an older adolescent, « give us the opportunity to draw more closely together the bonds of unity which unite the family, and they teach us how to love each other more deeply in a communion of ideals and of prayer. »

« The time devoted to prayer, when the whole family is gathered before God, » write the parents of still another family, « is certainly the most beautiful hour of the day. These are the moments that give parents their greatest joy... The results are worth all the effort. Family prayer is a source of Christian and family joy. »

### III. HOW VARIETY CAN BE INTRODUCED INTO FAMILY WORSHIP IN THE COURSE OF THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Each year, the liturgical feasts afford the opportunity of reliving the great stages of the Christian Mystery. Their solemn celebration in church should find its counterpart in the home.

The Crib keeps the mystery of the Incarnation before our attention throughout the Christmas season. Could not an analogous symbol serve the same purpose for the other feasts, as the Crib does for Christmas ?

To begin with *Advent*. God makes His promise of a Savior. An Advent wreath would recall the periods of expectation for Him. It is made of woven fir branches which are held together by ribbons or strings. To the wreath are affixed four candles. At the beginning of Advent it would be placed on a table before a crucifix. On the first Sunday a single candle would be lit during the evening prayer. On the second Sunday two candles, and so on. Before a picture of the Annunciation the following prayer would be recited : « Send to us, O Lord, Him Whom You have promised. »

Next comes *Christmas*. Beside the Crib decorated by the children would be a card bearing the greeting of the Angels : « Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace among men of good will. »

On *Epiphany*, as the Magi are placed before the Crib, the meaning of the feast would be explained : the manifestation of Jesus to the world.

The feasts sometimes have connected with them a folklore which

can be very valuable, if we give it its full meaning : Christmas gifts, special holiday dishes or cakes, are all signs of the family joy which should be shared — guests are an important part of feasts, too.

On the feast of *Candlemas*, the evening prayer will take the form of a procession ; it will pass from room to room, each member of the family bearing a lit candle and singing the refrain : « The Light to illuminate the world. » The procession should end up in the room which serves as the usual place of prayer. If possible, at least someone in the family will have assisted at the ceremony in the church and brought home a blessed candle.

*Lent* beckons us to penance. Forty days is a long time for children — a reminder, a symbol, an invitation to prayer, will be needed. A good photo of the desert would serve this purpose, as would a mite-box or a holy water font beside which these words would be found : « Wash me, O Lord, and I will be whiter than snow. »

Holy Week is a privileged occasion to penetrate more deeply into the mystery of our redemption.

On *Palm Sunday*, the blessed palm taken from church will be placed on a table at home. At the beginning of the evening prayer the father will say the antiphon : « The Hebrew children, bearing olive branches, went before the Lord ; they hailed Him saying : ‘ Hosanna in the Highest ’. » After the reading which narrates the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, each, taking a piece of palm, will go together from room to room, singing a hymn of glory and praise, and attach a strip of palm to the crucifixes throughout the house.

On *Holy Thursday*, before the evening meal, the father of the house will read the narration of the Last Supper (e.g., as it is given in St. Luke 22, 7-20). The meal itself will be concluded with a prayer like this : « Lord Jesus, Who, on the eve of your death, partook of a last meal with your Apostles, and commanded them to remain ever united in love, grant that we, too, may always remain united in your love. »

On *Good Friday*, the crucifix will be taken down from its usual place and will be set with honor upon a cushion. After a prayer which has the mystery of the cross as its theme, and a hymn of praise, inspired by the *Vexilla regis*, it will once again be hung on the wall.

On *Easter Sunday*, a picture representing Christ's resurrection will be set up together with a beautifully printed text which will appear under it : « Jesus has risen ; He is still with us. Alleluia ! » Before the crucifix will be placed a candle — if possible, one re-

ceived at the Vigil Service — as a symbol of resurrection and life. Certainly, parents will not fail to point out to their children the paschal candle in the church and to explain to them the ceremonies of the previous night with all its various elements : the new fire, the lighting of the paschal candle, the entrance procession and the rest.

The easter candle will be lit on *Ascension Thursday*. On Pentecost Sunday, however, in order to symbolize the gifts of the Spirit, a number of smaller candles will also be lit — one for each member of the household. « Come Holy Spirit, » they will all pray, « and enlighten the hearts of your faithful. »

Throughout the month of *May*, as on the feast of the Assumption, flowers will be placed before a statue or image of our Lady.

There is also the beautiful custom of giving each child a picture of his patron saint. On *All Saints' Day* these pictures, which would be of the same style, will be placed about the image of our Lady, and the prayer, that night, will be made in union with all these protector saints of the family.

The spirit of *All Souls' Day* will also be one of joy and hope, for our deceased relatives have made the journey to Heaven before us, and it will be in this spirit that we will go to decorate their graves.

To sum up. The liturgical cycle can easily be adapted to family life by simply applying the following principles : pick out the dominant theme in each feast ; choose a concrete symbol to represent it ; and, finally, select an appropriate reading and prayer to fit the theme selected.

## CONCLUSION

We readily admit that the suggestions contained in this article actually fit the situation of only a small number of families ; families, we might add, which have already reached a rather high level of spirituality. At the same time we do believe that experiences of this sort — perhaps only isolated ones at first, but which would increase with time — can be the starting point for a *change* in family habits. A tradition must be established and a whole mentality transformed.

It is above all through collaboration with other parents, as in Catholic Family Movement cells, for example, that patterns of action, which once seemed impractical and utopian, will become actual and easy ; and, little by little, they will finally enter into the family customs.

The fact that the goal is off in the future, is no reason to put off a start now. What cannot be accomplished by a single try, will be accomplished by several. If parents of good will do not get off to a sure start, might not we catechists accompany them along part of the way? If daily prayer seems an impossibility for a particular household, might there not be room, at least, for weekly prayer together?

In any case, we must avoid looking for solutions which are only substitutes; for example, replacing family prayer by the prayer of a number of families made together in church, though this can be of some value for a limited period of time. Also to be avoided are demands which, at the outset, are onerous, like vocal prayers which are too long and selected without much discretion.

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# The Catechumenate : A Paschal Journey

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## I. WHAT DOES « CHRISTIAN INITIATION » MEAN ?

When we speak of « Christian initiation » we mean the long spiritual journey which the soul must make :

— from its *first response* to the Divine call, the call to salvation,  
— right up to the full faith which the *Sacraments* of Christian initiation consecrate.

Between these two (first response to the Divine call and the Sacraments of Christian initiation) lies the Catechumenate. This is the period of Christian initiation which is crowned by the Sacraments of initiation : Baptism, Confirmation, First Communion.

Faith, end of the Catechumenate can be called *full* when

1. On the part of God : the Divine Message has been given, in its essentials, through the Church, and received by the catechumen (*traditio Symboli*), capable henceforward of giving an account of his faith (*redditio Symboli*) and of professing it (triple baptismal profession).

2. On the part of the recipient : the Christian engagement is complete, conversion (*metanoia*) is deliberate and entire :

— the soul *rejects* Satan, the false worships he propagates on earth, and the evil conduct he suggests or encourages,

— in order to *turn* completely to God, to have personal relations with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who has entered into his existence ; to take part in the mystery of salvation offered by God Himself, and therefore :

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1. Father Xavier SEUMOIS wrote an important essay on missionary pastoral action : *L'adaptation dans le culte* (3 parts, available on request sent to the author), and several articles in *Maison-Dieu* (Paris). — Address : 184, rue Washington, Brussels 5, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

— to enter with his entire will into conformity with the mystery of the Death and Life of Christ ;

— to take his part in the Paschal movement which, in and through Christ, leads from the kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God, from the servitude of the devil to the liberty of the children of God, from this world and its earthly interests to the Promised Land ;

— lastly, to join the family of the redeemed, the spiritual people of God, the Body of Christ, a royal and priestly People journeying towards God.

## II. IN CHRISTIAN INITIATION, EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON GOD, EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON FREE HUMAN CO-OPERATION

### 1. *Everything Depends on God.*

1. It is God Who takes the *initiative*, and He alone. From the outset, it is He Who calls to salvation, individually, *nominatim*, as He called Abraham. God breaks into each man's existence... It is for each man to answer the Divine call, as Abraham did. Abraham, Father of believers, is the model of faith, and of that journey which all catechumens must undertake.

There is the mystery, the two sides of the « Divine Vocation » :

— God calls : Vocation of Abraham, Israel, of the others, of Christ, of each one of us in Christ ;

— man replies : he answers God's call, corresponds to His grace.

2. If God has the initiative in Christian initiation, He is equally and especially present in its *completion*, the three Sacraments of initiation. These are the acts of Christ, which the Church repeats through her ministers, and which make us enter (*in-ire* = initiation) Christ's mystery.

Through these Sacraments the Church makes Christ's Passover actual for each one of us. She applies to each one individually Easter and its necessary sequel, Pentecost. Easter and Pentecost, central axis of the history of salvation, are repeated in all their force and efficacy, in favour of each follower of Christ, at their reception of the Sacraments of Christian initiation.

*Paschal aspect of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.* — These Sacraments are signs, but beneath each sign there is « a

mystery, » a mystery signified by the sign, a mystery which is infallibly accomplished as its sign is performed, provided the soul receiving it opposes no obstacle (in other words, provided the soul is interiorly at one with the mystery being performed, according to its capacities).

The mystery, signified and accomplished, is conformity with Christ, and more precisely, conformity with the mystery of His Death and Resurrection, conformity with Christ in His passing from death to life ; it is the entry into participation in His Paschal mystery, mystery which is precisely this passing over.

a) *Baptism*. — In Baptism the catechumen dies with Christ, is buried with Him, and is born again with Him to a new life. A new creature comes away from the baptismal font, a child of God in Christ, filled with Divine life.

This miracle, this mystery, is accomplished in the depths of the soul, but it is signified by the outward rite.

The water of baptism has a double symbolism of which we are reminded during the Paschal Vigil, at the blessing of baptismal water (e.g. Collect : *unius eiusdemque elementi mysterio, et finis esset vitii et origo virtutibus*).

In the first place, it is *the water that destroys sin*, the water which was pre-figured by the Deluge, instrument of God's wrath, annihilating a sinful world. It is the water of the Red Sea, destroying the enemies of God's People, and thus freeing them from slavery. It is the water of the Jordan in which, at the command of the prophet Eliseus, Naaman the Syrian bathed seven times and was cured of leprosy. The water of Baptism is :

- the water that frees us from the leprosy of sin,
- the water that frees us from the slavery of Satan and of sin,
- the water that destroys all the forces which are enemies of God.

It is also *life-giving water*. In Scripture, water is also a fertile element in which life generates. It was the water from the rock which, slaking the thirst of the Israelites in the desert, saved their lives. Our Lord has told us : we must be *born again of water* and the Spirit, if we wish to enter the Kingdom of God. (Jn. 3, 5).

We must pass through the rite of life-giving water, of the water which is source of life, in order to be mystically born again to a new life, the life of Christ Who is the Son of God and Who communicates to us Divine sonship, Divine life.

At baptism the catechumen is subjected to the rites of the water of destruction and of the water of life. It is *his passing through the Red Sea*, his Passover, that is, his passing from the slavery of the

devil, of the world of idolatry and sin, to a new creation, to the life of a child of God journeying towards the Promised Land of Heaven. That is the Christian Passover.

If it actually does what was only prefigured at the Passover of the Exodus, the Christian Passover is only valuable in so far as it is, for each one at baptism, the reception of Christ's Passover. If baptism is our Passover, our passing from spiritual death to Divine life, it makes us enter into conformity with Christ's Passover, and applies its fruits to us.

*Christ's Passover* is His *triumphant* Passion, the mystery of His Death and Resurrection, which as Second Adam He accomplishes as leader of a new human race :

— His Death, undergone to expiate the sins of mankind ;

— His Resurrection, living only for God (Rom. 6, 10), He is source of Divine life for those who are united to Him by faith.

Baptism is our Passover, *our baptismal Passover*, because it really conforms us to Christ's Paschal mystery :

— in a mysterious manner we die with Him. At His Passover, Christ died to atone for our sins. In our baptismal Passover He makes us die to our sins with Him. So *baptism is our Passover because it destroys sin in us ;*

— we are buried with Him. We share in the mystery of His burial, of His descent into Hell, that is, in His victory over the powers of Hell, over Satan. As we sing in one of the responsories for Matins on Holy Saturday, taking up a subject which is very fully developed in Eastern devotion : « *Destruxit quidem claustra inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli. Nam et ille captus est, qui captivum tenebat primum hominem ; hodie portas mortis et seras pariter Salvator noster disruptit.* » (Rom. Brev. Rp. 4. Mat. Holy Saturday). *Baptism is our Passover because it frees us from the slavery of the devil ;*

— we rise again with Him. By His Resurrection Christ won a new life, in the name of humanity and for humanity, the life of a child of God among the People of God. The baptismal Passover gives a new life, makes the baptized a new creature, raised to the supernatural order. The baptismal Passover groups the scattered children of God into one spiritual People, the Church (Jn. 11, 52). *Baptism is our Passover because it makes us members of the People of God.*

The liturgy of the Paschal Vigil reminds us that Baptism is our Passover, especially in the exhortation of the Celebrant just before the renewal of the baptismal promises, which sums up the teaching of St. Paul to the Romans : « We have been buried with Christ by baptism which immerses us in His Death. Just as Christ rose



from the dead, we also must live a new life. We know that the former creature which we were, has been crucified with Christ, so that henceforward, we may no longer be the slaves of sin. Therefore, let us realize that we are dead to sin, and living to God, in Christ Jesus Our Lord. » (Rom. 6, 4-11).

b) *Confirmation*. — According to ancient custom for the Sacraments of Christian initiation, Confirmation was given as the immediate completion of Baptism, perfecting the conformity with the Risen Christ.

During the baptismal rites, straight after the actual baptism, the catechumen is anointed on the forehead with Holy Oil. This act signifies that through baptism the neophyte joins a royal and priestly People (Apoc. 5, 10), becomes a member of the « chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, » of which St Peter speaks (I Pet. II, 9). This royal priesthood of the faithful, with its prerogatives and duties is bestowed at baptism. (This subject is developed in the Preface for the Mass of the Holy Oils on Maundy Thursday).

At Confirmation the baptized soul received another anointing with Holy Oil which, this time, gives him conformity with Christ, filled with the plenitude of the Holy Spirit, and visibly accredited by God to announce the Good News to men. God made manifest these realities of Christ at the moment of His baptism by John. « The Holy Spirit descended upon him » (Luke 3, 22). Then began the public life of Jesus, His role as the « faithful witness » (Apoc. 1, 5). « Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee, and the fame of him went out through the whole country » (Luke 4, 14). It is Christ's intention that each one of His followers should become His witness ; the prophecy of Joel should be realized in each : « I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh... and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy » (Joel 2, 28). That came to pass at Pentecost (Acts 2, 16). Pentecost is the necessary sequel of Easter. Confirmation, the Sacrament which gives us the Spirit of Pentecost, is the necessary sequel to Baptism, Sacrament of the Christian Easter. Thus the newly-baptized, in receiving the second Sacrament of Christian initiation, enter into a greater conformity with the life of Christ, become as St. Paul puts it, *Spiritus vivificans* (I Cor. 15, 45).

c) *First Communion*. — The riches of Christ go further still. It is not only necessary to be born again in the Baptism of water and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3, 5 ; Acts 8, 16-17), but in a mysterious manner we must communicate in the mystery of the Death

and of the Life of Christ, and be incorporated in Him, by nourishing our souls with His Sacred Body and Blood, immolated for our salvation, the Body and Blood of Christ as He lives triumphant at the right hand of the Father. By this, the Christian takes his full share in the Paschal mystery of Christ, since he shares His Passover sacramentally. The Body and Blood of Christ have just been offered up in the sacrifice of the altar, renewing all the fruits of redemption, that is, death to sin and life to God. Sharing in this sacrifice, receiving Christ's immolated Body and Blood, the new Christian assimilates the mystery of the Death and Life of Christ, and is transformed interiorly, according to the reality of this mystery. Death to sin is deepened within his soul, almost in his body ; the life of God develops within him according to the measure in which, by his participation in the sacrificial food of the People of God, he becomes one with Christ and with his brethren, the Sacrament strengthening the union and cohesion of God's People.

These three Sacraments of Christian initiation, therefore, introduce the catechumen into the fulness of the Paschal mystery.

The first generations of Christians were conscious that Baptism was incomplete without Confirmation (e.g. the abnormal situation of the Apostles before Pentecost, before the gift of fortitude enabled them to live their Christian lives in face of the rest of the world ; the first Christian community in Samaria. Acts 8, 17). They were equally conscious that baptism, which made the neophytes members of the royal priesthood of Christ, admitted them also to the Eucharistic assembly at which the royal priesthood performs its greatest act. Besides this, they appreciated the full gravity of the Master's words : « Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you » (Jn. 6, 54). Desiring Christ's salvation, it was not enough for the neophytes to enter by baptism into conformity with the mystery of His death to sin and life to God. It was not enough for them to receive in Confirmation, the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, promised by Christ as His own spiritual presence, strengthening and making up for His bodily absence since the Ascension (Jn. 16, 7). They hastened to the Eucharistic Table to offer to God the sacrifice of Christ and of the Church, to place within it their own sacrifice, and to be fed by the Victim Who would transform them inwardly into His dispositions of death to sin and life to God.

Only then were they considered « initiated, » for then only were they introduced into the « secrets of the Kingdom of God. »

Since Christ's Passover is repeated for each catechumen by the Sacraments of Christian initiation, it is normal that Easter Night

should be the privileged moment to initiate new Christians to these Sacraments. It is equally normal that Easter Night should be the great anniversary of their baptism for every Christian, since every baptism is an individual application of Easter.

As the Sacraments are the basis of Christian initiation, it is true to say that in this Christian initiation everything depends on God. It is a miracle produced by the Sacraments.

## 2. *Everything Depends on Man's Free Co-operation.*

1. From the very beginning of Christian initiation, there is question of man's answer to God's call. The whole of Christian training presents itself as successive calls from God, becoming more and more exacting, to which man's good will must respond. Man's answer repeats the whole history of Abraham, the whole history of Israel. In a word, it is the whole story of the work of grace, at the summit of which we find the « fiat » of Mary, and the « *ecce venio ut faciam voluntatem tuam* » (Heb., 10, 5-7) of Christ.

God's successive summons, as they gradually become heard, will bring about the true conversion (*metanoia*), that of the heart. At each stage, conversion has two aspects : of separation or disengagement, and of obligation or engagement :

— separation from Satan and his false worship ; engagement towards God and His service ;

— separation from a moral existence dependent on mere caprice, or on standards other than those set by God ; engagement to serve a God of strict morality, that is, One Who demands sanctity, set before man in the form of an Alliance, the perfect revelation of which is summed up in the commandment of love ;

— separation from the errors, the ideas of existence, the ' *weltanschauung* ' of paganism, an engagement to accept without reserve, and without compromise with former beliefs and errors, the new Revelation of God and the world, both visible and invisible.

Separation and engagement form the diptych of the religious history of Israel, whom God trained, through their Leaders, to be His People.

Every time that Christian initiation, as conversion, demands a separation, often painful, there will be a fresh engagement towards God, accepted in the obscurity of Faith, yes, but also in the happiness of Hope.

2. As we have seen, three Sacraments come as the crowning of Christian initiation. Here again, man's co-operation seems paramount. It is not necessary to recall that for an adult, unless the

*opus operantis* corresponds to Sacramental action, the *opus operatum* remains without actual fruit of grace, although the life-giving effect may be presumed as soon as the dispositions of the subject, that is, the *opus operantis* becomes sufficient.

Let us consider the baptismal rite itself as it was administered in ancient times. It shows clearly the relations between the dispositions of the subject and the effect of the Sacrament. When the catechumen was in the piscina the priest asked for his triple profession of faith.

« Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ? » — « I do believe. »

« Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son Our Lord, Who was born and died for us ? » — « I do believe. »

« Do you also believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting ? » — « I do believe. »

One of the three immersions followed each answer. The priest pronounced no other formula besides this interrogation on faith. This shows, on one hand, the fact that baptism consecrates faith already existing, and on the other hand, the tremendous rôle of personal co-operation with grace. Faith, which the Sacrament has just consecrated, if it is a gift from God, has been growing all during the period of Christian initiation, according to the scheme of Divine teaching — initiative from God, response from man.

Here we realize the task of the Catechumenate. It must create in each catechumen those interior dispositions, attuned to the Paschal mystery which will be accomplished within him when he receives the Sacraments of Christian initiation.

We have said that the Catechumenate is a spiritual journey. We know now that it is a Paschal journey, which must bring about :

- the passing from spiritual death to divine birth ;
  - the passing from the slavery of the devil to the Leadership of Christ ;
  - the passing from servile fear to the freedom of a life of love.
- In a word, the passing from Satan to Christ !

This Paschal journey is crowned by the Sacraments of Christian initiation, which then consecrate, in a mysterious and indelible manner, our belonging to Christ, bring about conformity with the mystery of His Death and of His Life, impart the Holy Spirit, and make us participate in the Body and Blood offered up in the Sacrifice of Christ's Passover.

We have said everything depends on God, everything depends on man. Between God and man we must place the mediation of the Church.



### III. THE MEDIATION OF THE CHURCH IN CHRISTIAN INITIATION

The Church exercises her mediation through the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments.

This mediation is part of God's plan. The Church is Jesus Christ extended and given to others. On earth She is the only means of Christ's mediation, for it is through Her, with Her and in Her that He fulfils His work of Mediator. Therefore, between God Who calls and man who answers, the one Mediator, Christ, must intervene, or the Church, for She is Christ as He is present and active on earth through the Holy Spirit.

#### 1. *The Ministry of the Word.*

The Church must guide, enlighten and instruct the Catechumenate community right through its Paschal journey, so that when its members receive the Sacraments of initiation, they will be quite ready to join the Paschal community of the baptized, the Eucharistic community.

This demands that, through Her ministers, the Church repeats for the benefit of Her catechumens, the course of training which God gave His People during the Exodus. He made Himself known, revealed His standards of holiness, educated them to live according to His Alliance. In the same way, through the ministry of the Word, the Church must educate Her group of catechumens. She must teach them about God, Jesus Christ, sin, salvation, giving religious instruction, certainly, but much more than a mere intellectual instruction, a true sense of God, an actual experience of the Divine and the sacred, by means of a Biblical catechesis and the witness She bears to Christ (witness of the Church in prayer, of the Church following the Evangelical Counsels, of the faithful living in universal charity without expecting reward), above all by Her sanctifying powers, through Her liturgical rites.

In Africa, insistence is necessary on the following themes during the Catechumenate :

— God's government of the world visible and invisible (spirits) and the conflict with Satan. God Who « governs » and « saves » is very near man ;

— the Leadership of Christ, established by God Sovereign Ruler of the universe, having subdued all the powers of Hell beneath His Feet ;

— the Alliance, whose human basis is so familiar to African

life (blood-alliance, communion-feast), which is the secret of God's intervention in history, as well as the basis of a moral life founded on revelation ;

— finally, the Church as the spiritual People of God assembled *ex omni tribu et lingua et populo et natione*, a People of redeemed souls, of those who, in a mysterious manner, have made a blood-alliance with God in Christ, and who share His banquet of Eucharistic sacrifice.

## 2. *The Ministry of the Sacraments.*

The catechumen must respond to the calls and ceaseless initiative of God. The Church helps him to do this, sustains and encourages him in the difficulties he encounters in separating from his errors and fears, in undertaking to serve God only, and to accept His demands.

The Church exercises this new aspect of Her mediation during the Catechumenate chiefly by sacramentals. In the rites for Catechumens, full of the efficacy of prayer made in Christ's name, the Church takes the Catechumen by the hand. She makes him renounce Satan and pagan practices, She casts out the devil, She bestows the salt of wisdom that he may acquire a taste for divine things. She opens his hearing, ephpheta, that he may welcome God's word without difficulty. By signs and the imposition of hands She gives him the strength of Christ to advance in well-doing. She entrusts him with the secrets of the Kingdom : the Symbol of Faith, Prayer in Christ (*traditio Symboli, traditio orationis Dominicae*), and asks the catechumen in his turn, to proclaim his faith boldly before the assembly, aided by the prayer of all (*redditio Symboli*).

In view of this efficacy of grace during Christian initiation, one can only wish for the re-introduction of the traditional rites and ceremonies proper to the Catechumenate. At the same time it is permissible even now, with the consent of the Ordinary, to restore certain « spiritual exercises » for the benefit of the catechumens, following the spirit of the supernatural training of the ancient discipline. These would supply, partially and provisionally, for the absence of definite liturgical rites.

Liturgical rites and spiritual exercises demand active participation from the catechumens. The first condition for participation to be active is that it must be deliberate and understood. Like the Sacraments, sacramentals include a sign and a grace, a sign which signifies the grace. The sign belongs to the visible order, the grace is invisible, it is the « mystery. » Precisely because it is signified by

a symbolic sign, the mystery becomes, in some sort, perceptible. The understanding of the sign should lead to the perception of the mystery. The sign will do its part the better the more it is understood and appreciated.

It does happen that through pastoral negligence mystery appears even in the sign. What should be clear becomes unintelligible. An obscure sign is performed, and the very fact of its obscurity renders it inapt to convey any understanding of the mystery. This completely upsets values in the sacramental order. And the pastoral consequences are tragic. Instead of a sacramental order as Christ instituted it, wherein the clearness and simplicity of the sign reveal the mystery of grace lying beneath it, we are approaching magic, in which practices are often remarkable for the unreasonable mystery and obscurity of meaning in its signs.

It must be admitted that the symbolic language of the Church is unintelligible for our catechumens without a careful preparation, explaining the Biblical antecedents of liturgical signs.

We alluded above to baptismal water. Its liturgical and Biblical symbolism of destroying water and life-giving water is much richer than the natural symbolism of water that cleanses. It is the same for most of the liturgical signs.

There should be a catechesis explaining all the signs employed in different rites, so that looking at what is before them, the catechumens can discover the hidden reality. These signs which they must be taught to read are of four kinds :

— people : Celebrant, Reader, commentator, ministers, choir, congregation ;

— gestures : bodily attitudes, processions, signs of the Cross, imposition of hands, striking the breast, etc. ;

— words : the language of the liturgy, often identical with the words of the Bible ;

— things : salt, oil, baptismal water, lights, liturgical ornaments, Bible, missal, Cross, etc.

The Catechumenate community needs to be taught that these signs express the fundamental attitude of the Christian soul : praise, adoration, supplication, oblation, penance.

By these rites, administered throughout the catechumenate, another objective in Christian initiation will be reached, that is, the welcome of the group of catechumens into the community of the already baptized. These will watch, with a mother's interest, the progress of their catechumens, as they are admitted to the initiating rites which lead them nearer and nearer to baptism. Together, the two groups will share the same public prayers, will join in the same acts of renouncing Satan and of professing their faith, and will take part in the one liturgy of God's Word.

#### IV. THE CHIEF STAGES OF THE CATECHUMENATE

##### 1. *The Pre-Catechumenate.*

As we said at the beginning of this article, God alone has the initiative of the call to faith, it is His gratuitous gift. This divine initiative is by no means restricted to the use of hard and fast means. God leads to faith by His own ways, even by means which we would consider too human, or from motives which are far from pure or supernatural *Investigabiles vias Domini* ! God's ways in the conversion of souls can be as disconcerting as in the history of Jacob or of Samson.

Often motives which attract to the Church are very imperfect. It can be social influence, fashion (it looks well to be a Christian !), or perhaps according to ideas of magic one would like to have children (which amounts in practice to tempting God !). Is it really a call from God that these souls have received ? Yes, probably, but dimly. Therefore a period of pre-catechumenate is necessary to sift these motives, to develop a sense of God, of sin and of salvation, until the soul, perceiving its own weakness, and its own incapacity to reach eternal happiness, turns towards God in an act of faith, which is at the same time the acceptance of a personal obligation. Now the soul hopes for salvation from God only, and to obtain it is willing to undertake to learn to know God, His Message and His Wishes, and to conform its life to these with real generosity. Then is the soul ready to join the catechumenate community.

This period of undoing the past and developing religious perceptions will be long or short in each individual case. At this stage the ministry of the Word will concentrate on the development of the Faith. Above all, it must evangelize, proclaim the Good News of Salvation granted by God through Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, faith cannot usually grow except in a soil morally prepared. For this reason, the pastorate of the pre-Catechumenate must stress flight from evil and the love of good. The opening chapters of the *Didache*, developing the idea of the Two Paths, from earliest tradition, are devoted to this.

Moreover, the religious sense must be roused during the pre-Catechumenate. Careful reading of the books of Tobias, Wisdom, Esther and Judith, with explanation, would contribute efficaciously to this religious development.



## 2. Admission into the Order of Catechumens.

Once the grace of Faith is there, causing a willing, personal engagement, evangelization properly so-called has done its work, and the pre-Catechumenate is over. The candidate must be admitted — it is now his right — into the order of Catechumens.

This admission to the Catechumenate community is a very important act. The whole religious atmosphere of the Catechumenate will depend on its spiritual depth.

The restoration of the ancient *Ordo ad catechumenum faciendum*, at present included in the Ritual for the Baptism of Adults, N<sup>os</sup> 5-15, is much to be desired. This Ritual contains :

- the interrogatory and beginning of catechesis, n<sup>os</sup> 5-7 ;
- the insufflation, n<sup>os</sup> 8-9 ;
- the imposition of the sign of the Cross, n<sup>os</sup> 10-11 ;
- the imposition of hands, n<sup>os</sup> 12-14 ;
- the blessed salt, n<sup>o</sup> 15.

These rites begin a very important stage in Christian initiation. The candidate is now a catechumen. He passes officially from infidelity to faith. Henceforward, he counts among Christians, forms part of the Church as a catechumen with the rights and obligations foreseen by Canon and diocesan Law.

The special grace attached to this rite is that of « conversion, » that is, the will to abandon false worship and immoral practices, in order to undertake to serve God, to know Him better in order to comply more closely with His demands.

Given the importance of the grace attached to this rite, the catechumen should grasp its richness to the full, therefore, he should be made to understand all its symbolism :

- that of the opening dialogue, signifying personal engagement ; of the answer to the catechesis, signifying the welcome given to the Word of God, and acceptance of it ;
- that of the insufflation ; the breath of Christ put the devil to flight, His breath bestows the Holy Spirit (Jn. 20, 22) ;
- the imposition of the sign of the Cross ; it is the sign of the triumph of Easter, of victory, of salvation. It is also the mark of consecration to Christ (like the branding of a slave) ;
- the imposition of hands ; gesture with which Christ healed the sick, and blessed children ;
- the salt ; as it preserves from corruption, it signifies perseverance in good. It gives savour, which signifies the wisdom which appreciates divine things. To offer salt is a sign of hospitality, manifesting the welcome offered by the Church to Her child.

### 3. *The Sharing of the Creed.*

After admission into the Catechumenate, the Divine Message is no longer the mere proclamation of it in order to arouse faith, but instruction, properly so-called, by which the Church develops this budding and awakening faith into the full dimensions of the Credo.

When this is over, the catechumen must know all the essential articles of faith, and have given proofs of the sincerity of his desire to serve God. Then baptism comes to consecrate this faith. It will conform the soul with the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ, principal object of this faith.

While waiting to receive this new mystical life in the Sacraments of initiation, the Paschal mystery of Christ, the catechumen must be « introduced » to all the major aspects of faith, expressed in its traditional formula, the Apostles' Creed. This is doctrinal teaching, but at the same time it is religious training, developing the attitude of the soul towards God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church.

With a view to impress the sacred character of this religious training, it would be well to perform the *traditio Symboli* at a spiritual exercise.

This ceremony would be suitably preceded by the administration of the exorcisms, for example, n<sup>os</sup> 16 and 17 for men, n<sup>os</sup> 22-23 for women (from the ritual of baptism of adults). They include the signing by the god-father and the exorcism. It would be good to conclude this « scrutiny » with the magnificent prayer accompanied by the imposition of hands, given as n<sup>o</sup> 28 in the Ritual.

As Bible reading preparatory to this ceremony, and to bring out its baptismal bearing, the passages fixed in ancient times for the first scrutiny could be read : Numbers 20, 1-13, and John 4, 6-42.

### 4. *The Sharing of the Pater Noster.*

This is Our Lord's Prayer, the Christian's prayer, the prayer which one has no right to say unless recognizing that God is a Father, not only from a feeling of benevolence towards men (which can be found in natural religions), but because God is the Father of the Word, to Whom He gives Himself from all eternity, and from Whom He also receives back His Gift. This mutual self-giving is so perfect and transcendent that it is the Holy Spirit, in the bosom of the Blessed Trinity.

It is the Lord's Prayer which cannot be said until initiated into our Lord's commandment : « Love your enemies, do good to those

that hate you » (Matt. 5, 44), otherwise it is impossible to say with any sincerity : « Forgive us our sins as we forgive them who trespass against us. »

When the catechumenate community is able to grasp the greatness of the Lord's Prayer, a ceremony would be very suitable to mark the sharing of the Pater. This ceremony would be very useful in leading souls towards authentically Christian prayer.

As for the sharing of the Creed, the sharing of the Pater noster could be preceded by a scrutiny. The exorcisms N<sup>os</sup> 18 and 19 for men, 24 and 25 for women, could be taken, followed by the Prayer N<sup>o</sup> 28 as in the previous scrutiny. To lead up to this ceremony, the Biblical reading formerly allotted to the Second Scrutiny could be used : Isaias 49, 8-15 ; John 8, 12-59.

### *5. Renunciation of Satan and all false worship.*

As soon as the doctrine of the Leadership of Christ and the truth of the Divine ruling of the universe have sunk sufficiently into the souls of the catechumens, it would be wise for them to make a first Christian engagement, deliberate, explicit and public.

This ceremony would mark the complete and absolute separation from false worships and local pagan practices. The words of Scripture about false religions in the Old Testament must be applied on this subject : as being the worst sin of all, abomination in the eyes of Yahweh. We have a strict pastoral obligation to insist on this separation from pagan practices, all the more serious because Africans, by temperament, are inclined to a religious syncretism in which the Christian religion and pagan practices mingle and dovetail together. They must be brought to a very clear understanding on this subject, to a complete break with paganism, an explicit rejection of every kind of false worship, and an unconditional adherence to the one Mediator between God and man, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

This ceremony then would be a spiritual exercise at which the catechumens would renounce — if possible individually — Satan, false worship, magic, all acts of propitiation addressed to the spirits.

Like the previous ceremonies, this one could be preceded by an exorcism. Those not used so far should be taken here, that is, n<sup>os</sup> 20 and 21 for men, 26 and 27 for women, and terminating with the Prayer N<sup>o</sup> 28. The ancient Biblical extracts chosen for the Third Scrutiny could lead up to the ceremony : Isaias 1, 16-19 ; John 9, 1-38.

## 6. *The Redditio Symboli.*

When the catechumens have finished the first cycle of initiation (History of Salvation, with insistence on dogmatic and moral truths — that is, the explanation of the Creed), another ceremony of initiation could mark their passing to the next stage (the detailed explanation of the Sacraments).

The *Redditio Symboli* (Rit. N° 32) would consecrate all that has been acquired up to now. The catechumens would come up, one by one, to recite the Creed before the Celebrant, in presence of all. The rites leading up to this : the official entry into the church (n° 29), the prostration (n° 30), the imposition of the hand (n° 31), mark the beginning of this new stage.

Here again, it is essential that the symbolism used by the Church (of the spiritual People of God and of the heavenly Jerusalem) should be thoroughly understood, and the symbolism of the procession (n° 29) realized (the catechumenate community journeying towards salvation, towards Easter, towards the Promised Land).

The *redditio Symboli* could be led up to by the Scripture passages which present baptism as a miracle of resurrection : I Kings 17, 17-24 and John 11, 1-45.

## 7. *Ephpheta.*

Once the catechumens have reached the last stage of their initiation, and the Church is about to deliver to them Her loftiest teaching, notably the Eucharistic mystery, the rite of Ephpheta (Rit. N° 37) preceded by exorcism by the imposition of hands (n° 33) finds its normal place here, and should be the occasion of great spiritual progress for the catechumens (cf. ephpheta in the Gospel : Mark 7, 31-37 ; Matt. 15, 29-31).

## 8. *Enrolment for Baptism.*

At a chosen moment, either of the entry into the group of *baptizandi*, or just before the Retreat preparatory to Baptism, the rite of enrolment for baptism could be restored. It is very important psychologically. The catechumen takes a personal step, and asks for baptism on a fixed date. His name is written, according to the Commentaries of the Fathers, in the « Book of the Kingdom of Heaven. » Inscription on the register, in a religious act, engages the Church, the catechumens and the sponsors.



At this ceremony of enrolment the Prayer in the Ritual (n° 11) *Deus, qui humani generis...* could be used, and the blessed salt, which St. Augustine calls the sacrament of the Catechumens, could be given.

### 9. *The Sacrament and Its Immediate Ritual.*

The last renunciation of Satan and the anointing with Oil (Rit. n°s 35-37a) should be reserved for the eve of baptism, while the actual Baptismal rite, as prescribed for the Paschal Vigil, would be n°s 37b-43 of the Ritual.

At the end of these ceremonies, the neophytes are like souls newly-risen, clothed in white, holding the light of Christ in their hands.

They have reached the end of their initiation, their own Passover, which gives them conformity with the Risen Christ.

N.B. Under the present ecclesiastical legislation the ceremonies of the rite of Baptism must be performed without separation, except on the Paschal Vigil. There is nothing, however, to prevent stressing the different stages of the Catechumenate by spiritual exercises planned in the spirit of the initiating rites described above. Baptism itself would then be administered using the full rite of Baptism for infants, following the usual method adopted in the Missions where adult baptisms are numerous.

## V. THE CATECHUMENATE A PASCHAL JOURNEY

These different rites and the catechesis they pre-suppose show clearly what the Catechumenate should be — a Paschal journey.

In the Paschal mystery, as in all the mysteries of salvation, God's intervention consists of three distinct phases :

— the phase of *figure* and prophecy : the Passover in Egypt and the Exodus under Moses ;

— the phase of *realization* : the life and Passover of Christ. Let us notice in passing, that St. Matthew and St. John give the life of Christ in the setting of the Exodus ;

— the phase of *application* : in the Sacraments of initiation. St. John, in his Gospel, puts these Sacraments before us in terms of an exodus.

Since the Sacraments of initiation constitute the Christian Passover, the Catechumenate leading up to them, must itself be an exodus, a Paschal journey. And in fact :

Just as God revealed Himself to the Jewish people during the

first Exodus, proving by the wonders on Mount Sinai His Transcendence, His almighty Power as well as His Mercy in His Will to make the Alliance ; just as in His own Exodus, Our Lord revealed to us the mystery of the divine life, that is, the Fatherhood of God ; in the same way, the Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, must reveal the Transcendence, the Holiness, the Mercy and the Fatherhood of God.

As almighty God, at the first Exodus, made the Alliance with the Chosen People, delivering them from the slavery of Egypt to bind them to Himself with bonds of love ; as moreover, at the real Exodus God made an eternal Alliance with man, in the Blood of Christ, the new Leader of humanity, so the Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, is the time of espousals, when God makes His Alliance with each soul, and should prepare it to ratify this Alliance for ever, with the reception of the third Sacrament of initiation, participation in the Blood of the New Alliance.

At the first Exodus God made known the demands of His Alliance by the promulgation of the Law. By this very fact He revealed Himself as a God of sanctity with moral obligations. At the true Exodus Christ presents Himself to us as the final Law-Giver, pronouncing the Law of His Kingdom during the Sermon on the Mount, and leaving us His commandment of love before His Death. The Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, shows the catechumens the demands of the Alliance, the laws of the Kingdom, the Beatitudes. It moulds souls to these virtues of Christ, so that at the moment of baptism, rising again with Christ, they will be quite ready to live this new life, « *non in fermento veteri, neque in fermento malitiae et nequitiae, sed in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis* » (Epistle, Easter, I Cor. 5, 8).

Just as Israel was tested by trial during the Exodus, was tempted to idolatry, tempted by concupiscence and pride (the murmuring of the people !), undergoing the temptation of Adam in their turn, and giving way to it as he did — as in the true Exodus, Christ was tempted by Satan, and had to fight ceaselessly against the devil during His Public Life — in the same way, the Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, brings the catechumen into the conflict with Satan, makes him face the temptation of our first father, but thanks to the strength of Christ given by the exorcisms, he emerges victorious, with the victory that Baptism will consecrate, in conforming him with the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the first Exodus Israel was fed by manna, the food *omne delectamentum in se habentem* (Wisd. 16, 20), and by the living water flowing from the rock (Wisd. 11, 1-4) ; in the true Exodus, Christ was sustained in His struggle against Satan by the angels

who ministered to Him in the desert, and by the angel of the Agony who came to comfort Him. In like manner, during the Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, sacramentals, exorcisms, blessings, must sustain the catechumen in his spiritual struggle.

Lastly, the Exodus was a period of intimacy with God. God trained His People to prayer, worship, chiefly by means of the Tabernacle of the Covenant where, « God talked with Moses face to face, as a man converses with his friend » (Exod. 33, 11 ; cf. Num. 12, 8 ; Deut. 34, 10). Similarly, the Catechumenate, a Paschal journey, must train its members to a life of intimacy with God, to prayer, to worship.

Being a Paschal journey the Catechumenate is :

- initiation to the intimate knowledge of God ;
- initiation to the life of Alliance with God ;
- initiation into the duty of a people bearing witness among men to the sanctity of God by a life of sanctity ;
- initiation to the exercise of a royal priesthood, the essential prerogative of God's People.

The Sacraments of Christian initiation come to consecrate all that, to imprint these realities upon the soul indelibly, thanks to their character as Sacraments.

Baptism will mark the Christian with a royal priesthood. Confirmation will make him Christ's witness before men. Finally the Eucharist will introduce him into the wondrous life of Alliance with God, and of intimacy with God which is the privilege of those who partake of the Body of Christ, and are nourished by the Blood of the New Testament.

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# Study Circles for Adults

## *A Formula To Be Renewed*

by H.-M. OGER, O.P.

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Our priests are often blamed for giving more attention to children than to adults.

This tendency of their sacerdotal activity no doubt has its origin in a pastoral principle much in vogue at the beginning of the century : « He who has youth with him has the future before him. »

Socio-religious research has led us back to a more realistic notion of the situation. In a town like Liège, religious behaviour follows the approximate figures :

95 % baptized  
75 % children making their Solemn Communion  
60 % religious marriages  
.....  
28 % who practise regularly.<sup>2</sup>

If we base our observations on the scale of ages, it is clear that the percentage of religious practice among men up to the age of 20 is about 33 %, but drops to 16 % after that age ! Figures for women show similar variations : 44 % before 20, 22 % after.

Practice therefore drops by half about the age of 20, in other words about the age of military service for young men and marriage for girls (and boys).

The above statistics apply to the period 21 to 35 years of age ; in the next period, 36 to 50, only a slight diminution in practice is experienced : 1 or 2 %.

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1. See biographical note in *Lumen Vitae*, VII (1952), p. 601. — Address : 38 Quai Mativa, Liège (BELGIUM).

2. Paul MINON, *Le peuple liégeois : Structures sociales et attitudes religieuses*, 1955. Secrétariat interparoissial, 8 Place P. Janson, Liège.



It seems therefore that the most critical crisis in religious practice does not occur always after the Solemn Communion, as is frequently asserted, but between 20 and 30.<sup>1</sup>

This need not surprise us. The American psychologist G. W. Allport had already observed, in his work *The individual and his religion*, that the twenties is the less religious period of life. At 21 or above, he remarks, men are less religious than at 20 or under. Enquiries tend to prove that this situation continues until the age of about 30.

This admitted, is there any reason why we should accept the situation without trying to remedy it by giving our ministry a new direction?

Certain cultured lay people have long noticed that priests seem more at home with children than with them, that they are not prepared to minister to adults...

Leaving aside the causes of this uneasiness or unpreparedness, we are glad to say that the situation is improving in this respect. The priest nowadays, through family groups, popular teams, parents' associations, district communities, establishes contact with his adult parishioners and not only with men of good works.

Lay-people, living in a world where all beliefs are questioned, feel the need of a more solid knowledge of their faith. Many suffer from a lack of balance between their lay education and their religion. They hear religion, the Church, the priests... criticized in their workrooms, offices, administrations. They are disconcerted by adverse arguments and feel unable to answer them. Left to themselves, they soon lapse into a mental relativity and a practical indifference in regard to religion.

In the confessional they mention « doubts » regarding Faith, but if there is no insistence on the part of the priest, they no longer trouble about it. It isn't worth troubling a priest about, they say.

*Such a situation should make us think.*

It should first make us understand that young people must be prepared to face their immediate future.

Adolescents should be warned that their faith will have to withstand a growing crisis and that they must base it on solid convictions and on practice in which their own personality, and not only the family's or the school's is engaged.

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1. The same study shows the diminution of practice after 12 to be about 5 % for boys and 3 % for girls. These figures apply to the town of Liège. They may be different in a purely working-class district.

The age of 17-18 seems to us the hinge-age : we must gradually bring the boys and girls to grow from a child's or an adolescent's faith into an adult faith, lucid, enlightened, adapted to the world in which we live.

It is hardly necessary to insist on the generalized practice of preparation for marriage. In our times, when the Church is left alone to defend the family, it should consider it as a duty to take the initiative of a vast campaign in its favour. Such positive action would be more effective and would place her in a better light than all the campaigns against divorce and birth control. This is not just a personal opinion, but a suggestion made by the *American Institute of Management* in its report on the Church.

If military service is a time of crisis for many young men, let their parish give them support during this time. Too few parish priests think of contacting the military chaplain in charge of their young parishioners, and youth movements are not particularly helpful to the older members in service.

Moreover, the 20 years' old should attract our particular care, and their religious formation ought to be continued during the period of 20 to 30 years. In the same perspective, it is recommended to keep in sight men between 30 and 40, as the majority of them have been neglected during their years of crisis.



From this point of view, we find it difficult to admit the discredit into which have fallen the « Study Circles, » which not long ago used to be so useful to adults. The priest has there an opportunity of dispensing in a familiar atmosphere a doctrinal teaching to a whole group of men. It is an elastic formula, easily adapted to various circumstances.

In its development, and with its rather exclusive tendencies, Catholic Action has sometimes eliminated all existing activities, and failed to replace them, but nowadays we realize that all good wills, sacerdotal and lay, official or not, must enter into the great missionary movement of the Church. Pope Pius XII has expressed his will in the matter at the time of the last World Congress of Lay Apostolate.

When we speak of « Study Circles, » we take the term in its widest sense. It will not always be possible to ask all the members of such a Circle to contribute personally, present papers or studies : all might not be capable or have the necessary leisure.

The important point, is that the priest should take this opportunity of giving regular doctrinal teaching, a sort of « catechism for adults » in a way. He will have to undertake a more thorough research than for a sermon, and he must insist on the synthesis of Catholic doctrine and show its cohesion. If so many lay-people are disconcerted by the objections they meet, it is because they have lost the sense of the great Christian perspectives, of God's design in the world, the *œconomia salutis*.

The priest who has not achieved a personal synthesis can have recourse, either to a good text-book written for superior studies as those of the *Éditions de l'école*, or in a work like *La solution du problème de la vie* by Father Lelotte, or else in a more profound study like the *Initiation théologique*. There is no lack of such good books in our days.

This recourse to an author must not prevent the priest from giving a lively, colourful teaching. Occasionally, to avoid monotony, it is advisable to invite a passing priest or lay person to deal with a particular subject, or a member of the Circle to give some personal testimony or a talk on the human, moral and spiritual aspects of his profession. All depends on the constitution of the group and its cultural level.

This work of doctrinal formation is within the means of any priest, and in our opinion, each should, in our present circumstances, group around him a certain number of lay-people, in order to raise the level of their spiritual life and prepare them for a more efficient apostolate in their environment.

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A few suggestions regarding the organization of such a circle may be helpful.

The audience should not be too numerous, or too few. Thirty or so perhaps would not be excessive, ten might be sufficient, perfection lies between.

The meetings would take place once a month or once a fortnight. In view of the fact that members of the circle often belong to other associations, it would not be wise to require a greater frequency, but attendance should be regular.

The priest would introduce the subject in a talk lasting  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour

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1. Such a talk, of course, must not appear like a sermon. It is rather in the way of a conversation and must lead to a discussion. It should start from concrete facts, so as to approach the preoccupations of the audience.

at the maximum. Discussion would follow.<sup>1</sup> The conversation must not be left to deviate, but the members must be allowed to submit any objections they have heard during the past month and which they have felt unable to answer satisfactorily.

It is desirable that the meeting should close with a prayer, a time of recollection, which shouldn't be difficult if it is held near a chapel or a church. Rather than recite a formula, let the priest extemporize a prayer recalling the subject treated that day, acting thus as the spokesman of his audience.

In order to attend to the spiritual formation as well as the doctrinal information, a day of recollection or a short retreat may be held for the members of the circle once a year.

As the present tendency in the Church is to associate husband and wife in spiritual formation, the study circle could be mixed. If this proves inconvenient let it be limited to men ; these are, as a rule, more concerned with civic and professional life, and therefore deserve our particular attention.

Besides, the only hours available to men — the evening — are usually not suitable for women, especially mothers of families. Some women whose spiritual development does not compare with that of their husbands, have no desire to attend a circle. There will therefore remain a sufficient number of men to form an audience of their own.

The chaplain must try to know personally the members of his circle. After giving them for a time a doctrinal and spiritual training he will find it easy to encourage some of them to join a family group with their wives, others to take part in some parochial activity, a work of charity or a professional group of Catholic Action.

He should also invite them to help one another, proving thus fraternal charity.

Our suggestions will perhaps give certain priests, already overburdened by activities, the impression that we wish to add another work of zeal to those he is already supervising. This is far from our thought. We conceive this circle rather as a prolongation of his preaching, an extension of his duty of doctrinal teaching.

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1. All those who, in the course of a similar reunion, have tried to change the monologue into a dialogue, have experienced the difficulty of inducing anyone to speak first, everyone observing a prudent reserve.

A practical hint : ask the audience to refrain from smoking during the exposé, but lift the ban as soon as this is over. This provides a diversion and provokes an exchange of opinions. The silence being broken, it will become easier to invite someone to speak.



Moreover, the circle can be an extension of an organization already in existence. This is in fact the easiest starting point. The members of the existing group form the first nucleus and the audience is enlarged.

The meetings of the circle can take place immediately after those of the other group, charity organization, Third-Order or Congregation. But the two must be quite distinct, in order to avoid the suggestion that the circle only plays a part of recruiting centre for the other organization. One must play the game loyally.

It isn't, by the way, indispensable that the Parish Priest preside the circle personally, or that it should become a permanent institution.

Some parish Priests organize each year, during Lent, meetings of the type described above, which give them an opportunity to review one after the other, the main aspects of Christian life.

Will the parish Priest who takes the initiative of a study circle get to know his parishioners more intimately, and after a time renew, with the help of better trained elements, the structure of his works?

This disinterested action — attracting sympathy by that very fact — will help him to establish personal contact with some people he only met previously on the administrative plane. It will mean more than once that he will « retrieve » in this way christians who less wasted forces in the Church.

The preparation of the meetings will make him return to the Bible, and reconsider his Theology with eyes other than those of the seminarist. His spiritual life and his preaching will benefit from this return to sources, and after a while, perhaps he will discover that he had need himself, as well as his parishioners, of a study circle.

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VARIA





# Catechetical Pedagogy of the Mentally Deficient Children

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## VI. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

### B. IMMEDIATE PREPARATION FOR THE RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT

*When should it be considered?*

In our last chapter we gave several suggestions concerning the long-range preparation of the mentally deficient for the Sacrament of Penance; which brought up the problem of their moral conscience and its formation. We pointed out, especially, that this moral formation should not concentrate solely on awakening and developing in the child the sense of sin, but should also include the notions of pardon, and Christian perfection or, at least, the desire of progress related to it. From this it may be concluded that the full acquisition of such notions constitutes the condition *sine qua non* of the Sacrament of Penance. Which would, of course, imply the rejection of even many normal persons who have more or less rudimentary conceptions of these truths. Such is not our intention. We think, on the contrary, that even before a mentally deficient has completely assimilated these truths, it is possible and opportune, if not indispensable, to present to him the Sacrament of Penance, to prepare him for it directly, and to permit him to receive it. That being said, no general rule seems possible, so different are the types of deficiency and the levels of psychological maturity.

We will then try to indicate here how to present this Sacrament to the mentally handicapped in general; how to prepare them immediately to receive it; how to administer it to them, and,

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1. See biographical note in *Lumen Vitae*, XIV (1959), 3. — New address : 53 rue de Babylone, Paris VII<sup>e</sup>, FRANCE.

finally, how to help them to profit by it for the progress of their supernatural life.

### *I. — How to present the Sacrament of Penance to the Mentally Deficient ?*

Four aspects, among others, of Penance, seem to us should be especially brought out in the catechetical presentation of this Sacrament.

The first is obviously the pardon of God, a notion which is relatively easy for the deficient child to assimilate.

The second is the effect which the pardon produces : Sacramental absolution, or healing, or supernatural resurrection ; in other words, the restoration of the state of grace.

The third aspect of this same truth is the reintegration of the penitant in the Church community, an aspect which is inseparable from the two others since it is in being reconciled with the Church that the sinner is pardoned and justified by God. This notion of return to God — in and through the ecclesiastical community — is obviously one of the most difficult to present to the deficient child. And here again, how many normal Christians are not « deficient » on this point ?

Finally there is the presentation to the child of the notion, which is more accessible, but for that not less difficult to present, of expiation and reparation.

We have however, tried to initiate children, even seriously handicapped from the intellectual point of view, to these four aspects of the Sacrament of Penance.

Here are several examples of our method of procedure :

#### *1. The Pardon.*

To have the child arrive at the notion of pardon is, let us repeat, relatively easy. Many even deeply deficient children know — or at least feel — what it is to be pardoned when they have done wrong. Taking into account what we have said in the preceding chapter,<sup>1</sup> these children — to the extent that they have a notion, even though confused, of good and bad, a healthy and true feeling of guilt, even at an embryonic degree — have felt joy and comfort at having received this pardon, and thus know, at least intuitively, the conditions of such a pardon : to acknowledge one's wrong, to show regret at what one has done, and to promise to do better,

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1. See : *Lumen Vitae*, preceding issues, 1959 and 1960.

or to try to. A child — any child — has normally experienced all that many times during the course of his development, in his relations with his parents or his teachers. We have also requested these latter to so act that this experience of pardon and of what should precede and follow it be really lived by the child. The attitude of the one who pardons will have, from this point of view especially, a considerable importance. If he knows how to act so that his pardon is generous, full, without return — which does not mean without conditions nor without requirements — he will give the child a before-taste, a prefiguration, as modest and imperfect as it may be, of the Divine pardon to which he aspires, and it will be as it were a vital preparation.<sup>1</sup>

However, a more immediate, more direct and also more dialectical preparation remains indispensable. For this, the Bible can be a very great help.

Tell the children, or solemnly read to them a scene of the Gospel such as that of the sinner repenting and being forgiven, or that of the adulteress (we have done this with an apparently considerable success — by adapting, of course, the text and especially the terms to the children), or, with older ones, that of Zacharias ; translate the feelings of these persons (sadness, repentance, joy) in a sober bodily expression; have the children themselves enact these attitudes, stripping them of all « artificial » dramatization and possibly accompanying them with a few very simple words such as « Pardon, my Lord » or « Thank You, my Lord. » These and other methods can place this notion of pardon on a level which is properly « Christian. » Appropriate songs may also accompany this presentation.

## 2. *Healing, Resurrection, Restoration.*

More delicate is the presentation of the aspect of « healing, » « resurrection, » « restoration » of the Sacrament of Penance. The symbol of the spotted garment which is washed — or exchanged for a clean one — is obviously very accessible to the children, but it does not seem to us to be without danger. Indeed, as we pointed out in relation to the Sacrament of Baptism, this symbolism, although of value, is none the less negative, over-simplified, and can even lead to a certain spiritual laziness : « I have spotted my clothing — well, I will clean it... and everything will be all right... I have only to begin again. » Besides, the child will be but very

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1. See « Pédagogie du Pardon » by the same author, in « Educateurs », n. 53 (Paris).

little encouraged to receive this Sacrament again if he does not feel really « dirty ; » on the other hand, if he is scrupulous, he will pass his time in the confessional « to be sure that he is completely clean. » Such deformations are especially to be feared with the deficient who, on the one hand, spontaneously reify spiritual truths and, on the other hand, can be carried to a scrupulous obsession and a morbid feeling of guilt. We would prefer then, again, the positive comparisons : the plant which is left without water (a concrete experiment) and which, half wilted, takes on life and vigor when it is watered ; the little gold fish taken out of his bowl for a minute who becomes all stiff, and who finds again his liveliness as soon as he is put back into the water.

Of course, although these comparisons seem better for us, they also present imperfections. They have however more dynamism and are related to the presentation which we have suggested for the Sacrament of Baptism — which is a great advantage. The child will grasp better, in fact, that this is the same life — the life of grace — which may dwindle, or even disappear, and reappear or, at least, find again its vigor with a divine intervention.

Better still are the comparisons found not on the vegetal or animal level, but on the human, those in particular which are offered to us — again — in the Gospel. The parable of the prodigal son, telling it just until the end, that is, until the reintegration of the son in his family, can be particularly eloquent, even for the deficient, provided that its presentation be at the same time very simple and very striking — that is, stripped of the accessories (not insisting on the swine, on the ring on the finger, nor on the fatted calf — for otherwise the children will be more impressed by these aspects, to the detriment of the essential) and, at the same time sufficiently concrete and lively, so that the young listeners really participate in the « action. »

### 3. *The Reintegration in The Church.*

This last parable will have, particularly, the advantage of permitting the logical presentation of the third aspect of the Sacrament, the reintegration in the Church. In fact the prodigal son becomes son again at the same time that he enters the house of his father. There a big feast welcomes him, in which everyone takes part with him... Here there are even possible allusions to the Eucharist and Heaven. One must however be careful that the child does not too closely relate the reception of the Sacrament of Penance to that of the Eucharist, or confession... to entry in blessed eternity...

The reintegration in the Church can also be evoked by means



of the « technique » of bodily expression<sup>1</sup> : separation from the community through one's fault, repentance and reintegration in the group are able to constitute the three acts of a small dramatization. We can start from scenes of daily life : a child has been bad, is excluded from the group ; he is sorry and the circle opens again for him. This can also lead to a stylization on a more general plan, and especially on the sacred level.

However, it must be remembered, as for the preceding notion, that the child is generally not excluded from the Church, has not lost the state of grace when he comes to Confession (mortal sins of children, especially those of the mentally handicapped, are quite rare). It is thus important not to accentuate the symbolism of death and exclusion, and here again the positive aspects of these analogies should be stressed.

It must also be taken into account that the true social and especially community sense is but tardively awakened in the child, in general, and usually comes even later for the mentally deficient. This absence of a true community sense can be very well noticed in a child who has a powerful gregarious sense and a deep instinctive need to belong passively and in a very egocentric and selfish fashion to a group. This gregarious instinct is even, in a sense, more powerful in its infantile and selfish form when the normal evolution towards a more adult and oblationary form of love for others is not made. In consequence, the idea of reintegration in the Church will be that much less accessible to the mentally deficient child. This does not mean that we will not try to present it to him, but simply that it will be done with a wise progression, and especially that the child will not be required to have a full and vital comprehension of the authentic community notion.

And here again, how many Christians, who are not officially « deficient, » do not see Confession under its purely private and individualistic aspect, without a true reference to the Church community ?

Finally, a celebration can complete and put into action, elevate especially to the level of prayer these different notions and the fundamental attitudes that they are called to awaken in the child. Among the elements of this celebration, we see : an entrance into the Church on a hymn of Penance and of hope, and a welcome by the celebrant, the father of the prodigal son, who will also be presented as taking the place of God and pardoning in His name.

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1. We point out that this technique of bodily expression must not be confused with that of pantomime. For this is much more simplified and must exclude any comic or grotesque elements.

#### 4. *Expiation and Reparation.*

We have also preceded the Confession with a very simplified Way of the Cross (reduced to four stations so as not to go beyond the limit of the attention of a mentally deficient) and including a stop before the confessional whose meaning was underlined : « It is here that the priest, in the name of the Lord, pardons us our sins for which Jesus suffered so much... » This of course supposes that the notion of Redemption of faults through the passion of Christ has already been studied and sufficiently assimilated in the preceding catechetical training of the children. But it seems essential, for the deficient child to approach the Sacrament of Penance, that he understand that the pardon of our faults is obtained for us by Jesus Christ. Will he not more or less clearly or confusedly see, through that, that the love of Jesus is stronger than evil or death ?

As for the notion of bloody expiation and reparation, the child will understand that rather easily. Is he not accustomed to being punished for his misdeeds ? We are then very tempted to simply tell him : « When we have done wrong, we are punished. But here, it is Jesus Who, because He is very good and He loves us, is punished in our place... even to the worst sufferings and to death... » But does this presentation not have certain dangers ? This is what we must ask ourselves, at least for the deficient child for whom simple notions easily become oversimplified. And nuances are difficult to bring out here.

For the child, to punish an innocent is an injustice. The idea that he has of the Heavenly Father, does it not risk being dangerously falsified by this ? It would then be necessary, in our opinion, to insist here again on the mystery of the love of Jesus Who offers all for us to His very good Father, Who accepts all and Who, before such love, wishes to save us from sin. For there is a danger of accentuating the idea of a reparative expiation exacted by an outraged God in His supreme dignity.

Do not insist either on the sufferings inflicted on Christ, nor on the meanness of his judges or his executors. The deficient child is, by definition, very fragile psychologically, very « impressionable. » These details strike him much more than a normal child. He risks staying attached to them longer, or may even enjoy them by a sort of sado-masochism which is more or less explicit or even unconscious. We have seen these types of reactions.

Finally, the notion of reparation, for the child, can be presented without particular difficulties, in the sense that the deficient will

very readily understand that, when he does wrong, he must himself put things back into order, within his capabilities. But a possible danger consists in the child's losing, by this very fact, the notion of the generosity of divine pardon, and of the transcendency of the redemption by Jesus Christ in comparison with our own reparation or our sacramental « satisfaction. » Thus we must be careful not to transpose, purely and simply, on the level of the Sacrament of Penance, the sanctions imposed on the child or even those freely chosen by him in daily life and education.

Let us repeat, the idea which should dominate all other notions in the spirit and especially in the heart of the child, is that of an authentic pardon, an expression of the infinite goodness of the Heavenly Father, obtained by the power and the love of Jesus Christ, making us fully members of His Church.

This essential notion having been acquired by the children, — taking into consideration their age and their degree of retardation — they can be more directly prepared for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

## II. — *How to prepare the Mentally Deficient for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance ?*

Here again there are four fundamental aspects of this preparation : the examination of conscience, contrition, resolution, and, finally, the acclimatization to the material conditions of the reception itself of the Sacrament of Penance.

### 1. *The Examination of Conscience.*

As we said in Chapter V, the mentally deficient, even those whose moral conscience is not very well enlightened or formed, can have an amazing « moral sense » and show in this area an exceptional delicacy.

It remains no less true that it is necessary, at least at the beginning, to aid the deficient to make his « examination of conscience » and even to profit by this examination to form this conscience. Certain deficient must for this examination be assisted for many years. Others will be able to and should come to do it themselves and many succeed remarkably.

This aid, more or less prolonged, will be given either by the parents, or the teachers — especially the catechists — or by the priest himself — this latter, unfortunately too often, within the confessional itself. In any and all cases, this assistance is particularly delicate. It requires, in fact, a very deep respect for the child, for

his liberty, and for his secret. It requires also a certain understanding of the psychology and of the language of the deficient, an understanding which is at least intuitive or empiric, if not scientific. It demands that one keep in mind what we said in Chapter V. We will here take up again some of these elements which we will complete by other practical considerations.

*A. — It must be taken into account the degree of moral evolution of the child, and particularly :*

a) the fact that the deficient child is very much influenced by those around him. Thus one must be careful, while helping him to prepare himself, not to suggest to him the sins which he will say that he has committed... simply because it was suggested to him that he might have committed them ;

b) the fact that the deficient child will often judge the gravity of his acts according to the material consequences rather than according to the intention, or according to the punishment received rather than the true responsibility and the really deserved sanction. He must then be brought to disassociate one from the other ;

c) the fact that the deficient child is particularly limited in his capacity to resist his instinctive impulses and that he may present pathological troubles called « comportmental » or « characterial. » Thus it is that certain of these behaviors (such as anger, violence, masturbation, lies, thefts...) should not be considered « guilty » to the extent that it is suspected that these are acts of which the child is slightly or not at all responsible, acts which are caused by weakness or sickness rather than sin. For this would only lead to making the child anxious and this anxiety would aggravate the situation rather than alleviate it. Sometimes these « symptoms » would disappear, but would in reality make place for other attitudes which, whether they are exteriorized or not, would at least be as unfortunate. It is here that the priest or the teacher would have a great advantage by being informed about these questions and by working in liaison with competent persons without violating, of course, the sacramental or professional secret. The psychopathological vocabulary is quite deplorable in this regards, for it employs moral terms to describe pathological comportment. On the contrary, an attempt should be made to separate them one from the other, while at the same time being aware that, on the one hand, they are often difficult to distinguish on the basis of external observation, and, on the other hand, that they are often associated (in this sense that a same behavior can be partially moral and partially morbid). The catechist or the teacher who helps the child to



examine himself does not however have to accept such a responsibility. In fact :

*B. — The examination of conscience should not become a Confession before time.*

Let the catechists then first of all be careful, in this preparation, not to « devitalize » the Confession of the children, that is, not to replace the concrete and often crude terms which the children use by more academic but more abstract and less « lively » terms. If, for example, a child proposes to accuse himself of having « fought with the other kids » or of having « pulled the dog's tail, » do not tell him : « Well then, you will accuse yourself of having been bad twice. »<sup>1</sup> If a child wants to say that he called a more deficient child an « idiot » (which happens), answered back to his mother, or called his teacher a « wierd bird, » do not tell him « You will say that you have used three bad words »... And, as we said before, if he says that he has refused to help others in such or such circumstances, was too loud in a place where he was supposed to be quiet, do not encourage him to simply say that he has « been disobedient twice. »

Not only, in fact, will the comments and the advice given by the priest be more pertinent if the accusation of the child remains more precise, but the little penitent himself will engage more profoundly and more vitally into the very act of confession.

Of course, the opposite should also be avoided, but the mentally deficient hardly ever sin by a profusion of useless details.

On the contrary, the deficient child will often remain mute before the one who is preparing him. All the indications given will leave him without apparent reaction, or else he will deny having committed any wrong act whatsoever. We will see in a moment what must be done for this in the confessional, but, during the preparation, let the catechist remain discreet and confidant. The same child who remains negative or apparently distracted here will perhaps, in the confessional, be very talkative. Besides, let the catechist remember that he is not to « pre-confess » the child ; let him even avoid any direct question. Some are accustomed to say — and it is undoubtedly better thus : « A little boy or a little girl can sometimes do such or such fault... » or again : « What do you think a child can do which is not good ? » or still : « What

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1. Let us point out that there is also the possibility of mistaking a personal weakness for a sin, and that there is consequently a danger of misleading the conscience of the child. As a matter of fact, weakness is not a sin, and it can, to a certain extent, be an excuse for it.

is bad, for example, on the part of a little boy or a little girl? »

Still better, it seems, is the method inspired by the one which was formulated by Madame Fargues and which consists of saying to the child : « How do you think that Jesus would have liked this little boy or girl to be ? What would Jesus have wanted him or her to say and do ? How would He want him (or her) to behave with his daddy, his mother, his brothers, his sisters, his little friends ? at home, in the classroom, at play, in prayer ? Think about it : anything that wasn't done just like Jesus would have liked it, that is what you must say in Confession... » This method, which we have experimented many times, seems particularly good, because it is more positive than negative, and because it prepares the child for a true contrition and firm purpose of amendment.

## *2. The Contrition and the Firm Purpose of Amendment.*

These two aspects of the reception of the Sacrament of Penance are, as has been often pointed out, almost inseparable. The contrition will only be true, in fact, if it implies a true firm purpose of amendment. And, reciprocally, the purpose of amendment constitutes, in good logic, the least equivocal sign of a true contrition.

This is even more true for the child, especially when it is a question of deficient. We have seen the dangers of expressions such as : « Your sins have made Our Lord suffer... have made Jesus cry. » They are likely to cause many false interpretations, much anxiety, and to provoke infantile behavior. They put the accent on the negative, and are not necessarily followed by efforts and action.

Opposite results, though, can come from calling on the child's need and desire to act better, from recalling the fact that God wishes this for the better good and the happiness of the child as well as for those around him : positive motives which generate progress.

This way of acting is very different from the simple : « Do that to please mother or little Jesus. » Here we remain in a childish perspective which is not without its inconveniences, for it maintains the child in a morality which is likely to appear to him as relative and extrinsically determined.

Here, on the contrary, the child progressively gains consciousness of an absolute good which is at the same time « his good » and which coincides with God Himself and His beneficent will. The child discovers, in contrast, that sin is at the same time the « evil

of man » and the « evil of God, » that is, that it is at the same time in contradiction with his most noble aspirations and with that which the Lord expects of him. As mentally deficient as he may be, these notions are fundamentally and, so to speak, intuitively accessible for him. The fact of having discovered them in the preparation itself, and then in the sacramental action, will give him the desire to receive often the Sacrament of Penance, for healthy, manly and oblation motives, and not only to be consoled or tranquillized. And this will lead him to make good use of it.

Let the child then come from his preparation already planning his resolution. Let him be invited to tell the priest about it. Little by little he can even retain this resolution from one confession to the other. Let it be remembered here the relative difficulty of the mentally deficient to project himself in time, either forward or backwards. But let us not exaggerate this difficulty. The mentally deficient, besides, often has a very faithful memory.

His will to be better, his « ideal, » in other words his conception of this particular aspect of God's love for him being now somehow awakened in his heart and his mind, the deficient child is going to receive the Sacrament of Penance. Some precautions still remain to be mentioned :

### *3. The Acclimatization to The Material Conditions.*

It is quite obvious that the deficient boy is not obliged to confess in the confessional, which may trouble, disconcert or even frighten him. He is likely to be taken aback, struck by timidity or even terror, and incapable of opening his mouth. Once « blocked » before the confessional, he may go to the extent of never wanting to hear about it again, or of having a reflex of repulsion which he will not be able to reason and for which neither he himself nor anyone else will be able to help. In such circumstances, should not deficient girls be considered as sick or infirm, and dispensed from the conditions of place which are normally obligatory and usual ?

It is most important that the child not bristle or block. He can then be taken outside the confessional, for the first times at least, when it is a case of teaching and familiarizing him with it. But it will be better that he eventually get used to the confessional of the « big people. » It must also be taken into account that on the other hand, the girls especially will feel more at ease in obscurity. In any case, sooner or later it would be advisable to present the confessional to the deficient child : « You see, » the priest or the

catechist can say, « Father is here, and you go there ; you will perhaps not be able to see him, but you will be able to hear him, and he will be able to hear you too. » Call the child by his name at the beginning of the confession, with a word of welcome : « John, Lucy... you see, I am here to pardon you in the name of Jesus who will help you... » This will relax the child by familiarizing him with the new situation. This will be the translation of the admirable : « Dominus sit in corde tuo et in labiis tuis... » ... in language adapted to the mentally deficient : « Joseph, Jacqueline, may the Lord be in your heart, with you, and may He help you »...

### III. — *How to administer the Sacrament of Penance to the Mentally Deficient ?*

Now remains the most important : the administration and the reception of the Sacrament. But it can be seen how one and the other will be facilitated by this anterior preparation.

Of course, this part concerns most particularly my priest colleagues. They alone, it goes without saying, can in fact « confess. » And it is important, let us repeat, that the catechists avoid all misunderstanding by the child on this subject, even if he tells his catechist — as we have seen — that it is to him that he would rather confess... It is however useful that the teachers know « how this all takes place generally, » if only to be able to instruct the child beforehand... or also to inform the priest. Let us note, in fact, the difficulty which the priest has when someone sends him, without telling him, deficient children or adolescents, in the midst of a crowd of penitents from his parish. There is a difficulty also when we impose on these young deficient a wait which is too long and which, if they are numerous, generally becomes stormy and little favorable for piety.

#### 1. *Preliminary Condition.*

First of all, let the priest who confesses a deficient « really believe » in him ; in other words, let him be persuaded that the child in question is capable of a true confession, of a true sacramental pardon, of a true progress... The child will soon feel — intuitive as the deficient so often are — if the priest is really convinced of the seriousness with which he takes things.

On this subject, let the priest not be disconcerted by a child who arrives laughing or twisting himself : such reactions of the deficient are often an involuntary mechanism of defense or embarrassment and are even more intense as the mentally deficient is more



« taken » and impressed. This then takes nothing away — and, in many cases, on the contrary — from the depth of his feelings and his true seriousness.

## 2. *The Avowal.*

The deficient child will often be slow to start. He needs time to adjust himself, to « settle » himself, to find his assurance and his ideas. His beginning will be slow. He needs to think. He will sometimes express himself with difficulty, or even with the characteristic faults of word and language.

One of the master qualities of the confessor should then be patience. Even if he is rushed, let him not show it. If not the child will become aware of this tension, this haste, and will be silent, although knowing very well that he had something else to say. He will leave the confessional anxious, discouraged and humiliated. He will not return without repugnance.

Certain priests believe that the deficient children cannot confess or have nothing to say, simply because they have never adapted themselves to their rhythm. Greater still is the blundering of the confessor who « pushes » the deficient to make him speak more quickly. The latter of course does not better, becomes discouraged, and leaves sad at heart. On the other hand, the mentally deficient greatly appreciates the confessor who shows him goodness, kindness and patience. Then he confesses very frankly, very seriously and very willingly. He could, from this point of view, serve as an example for many normals.

Sometimes the avowal will come all by itself, and very well. Sometimes the priest must intervene, prudently, and, keeping in mind the remarks made above, ask questions. The child will only answer yes or no. But it must be assured that he is not answering automatically, or by chance, or according to the tone of the confessor, or his insistence on certain points. The best thing to do then is to ask the same question in another way.

Sometimes the child will not answer at all, will say nothing. It is not necessary to conclude that he is completely idiotic and incapable. It is generally that he is not yet familiar, or that he is inhibited or blocked. Here the confessional may sometimes have to be abandoned by the priest and the child, who will simply install themselves on two chairs.

Let the priest not be scandalized either by the crude language of certain deficient. It is the expression of their simplicity and their frankness. Is this not better than the stereotypes and enumerations that certain normals have from their prayer books? Is it not

more « alive » ? Here again, let the confessor not become indignant or call for more restraint in vocabulary.

### 3. *The Admonition.*

The little word about the feast day or the saint of the day is scarcely ever of much profit for the majority of deficient. Some of them listen politely, but to no real advantage.

It would seem better or more opportune to part from the accusation and to lead the child prudently, by several questions, to better know and especially better discern the will of God for him : « In all that, what in your opinion is your big fault ? What do you think is your biggest sin ? What can you try to do now to be a little bit better ? Do you think that Jesus would like that ? Of course, you are not going to be completely good all at once, but together we are going to ask Jesus to help you and, slowly, you will perhaps make progress... »

Do not be content with a vague answer : « I want to be good... obedient... » Rather bring the child to be precise by continuing : « Yes, but good in doing what, for example ? What is it that you do not do very well right now that you could try to do better ? »

If necessary, if the child does not find it himself, suggest, from what he has confessed : « Couldn't you be a little kinder to your playmates, if you tried ? say your prayers better ? answer your mother nicely ? Choose what you want, what you think that Jesus wants... »

It would seem profitable to then add : « Now you will say after me : My good Jesus, I love You, I ask Your pardon... I am sorry with all my heart... Jesus, ask Our Father in Heaven to pardon me my sins... I am going to try to do better. Pardon, Jesus... I am going to make efforts to be better, to be more..., to not be so... Help me, Jesus. »

### 4. *The Absolution.*

« And now, » we can tell the child, « you are going to be very sorry in your heart... say to Jesus that you love Him very much... and, during that, I am going to give you the pardon of Jesus. » If the child knows his Act of Contrition, we can start it for him : « Oh my God, I am heartily sorry... » but formulae are dangerous for the deficient. For there is the risk that they recite them without understanding them and, of course, without thinking about them.

It is better to obtain an attitude of the soul which is true and expressed in very simple words.<sup>1</sup>

### 5. *The satisfaction.*

The confession can be concluded : « Now Jesus has pardoned you and you can be happy. But, before going away from the Church, you are going to go to a quiet corner over there, towards the altar, put your head in your hands, and pray very hard for a moment. After that you can go and play, and be happy. »

It is here, it seems, that it is advantageous to give the child his « penance. » Even if it has been indicated at the moment when it is ordinarily done for normals, that is, before the absolution, it is a good idea to repeat it here, in case the child has forgotten it in the meantime.

In certain cases, it is necessary to do this penance with the child in the confessional, making him repeat a short prayer. In any case, this sacramental satisfaction will have every advantage if it is not confounded, here again, with the mechanical recitation of a formula, learned by heart, which the deficient will rush through. If however he is given such a formula, it seems necessary to add : « You will say a nice 'Hail Mary' to the Blessed Mother who loves you so much... from the bottom of your heart... very quietly... and afterwards, you will stay a little moment without saying anything, to let Jesus feel, in your heart, that you love Him very much... »<sup>2</sup>

With all this, one will often be struck by the admirable seriousness and piety with which the deficient children do their penances.

It remains to see how they can judiciously use the Sacrament.

## IV. — *The frequentation of the Sacrament of Penance and the spiritual progress of the Mentally Deficient.*

### 1. *The Opportune Time.*

If the deficient child has not been affectively hurt in his contacts

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1. This must be said also for the catechists: it may not be opportune to recommend to the child "when the priest will give you absolution, you will recite the Act of Contrition," but rather, "when the priest will forgive you in the name of Jesus, you will feel sorry for your sins in your heart, you will tell Jesus that you love him very much." For this is without doubt more true and more efficacious in the present case.

2. This is true for children. With adolescent boys or girls, even of a low mental age, a simple but already more adult language should be used.

with the confessional... or with the confessor, it is probable that this child will willingly frequent the Sacrament of Penance. It can be necessary to remind him that he has not been to confession for a while but, very often, the mentally deficient has an extraordinary sense of timing and of his own accord, he will ask to receive this Sacrament when necessary. He is also more able than is generally believed to take real initiatives in this area.

Excesses can sometimes be encountered. Either the child becomes installed in a routine, or he goes to Confession at the least occasion, at the least peccadillo, or, as certain other Christians, he does not know how to go to Communion without having confessed each time beforehand, or else finally, he shows a morbid need to confess as a result of a feeling of pathological guilt. In all these cases, the educator should intervene with delicacy and with prudence to bring the child to take consciousness of the act which he poses and to eliminate, so far as possible, simple automatism and improper motivation.

### 2. *The Resolution.*

The best means to avoid routine will undoubtedly be the « resolution » to which we have alluded and which the child should already foresee when he prepares his confession.

This resolution will again be taken up with the confessor who should consider it as important. Without a doubt, the child will have difficulty to stay with it and to keep it. Which does not mean that it does not interest him.

Here again, and as we said above, the deficient's memory, which is often remarkable, can play a role. In any case, the resolution will be for the child a precious factor of spiritual progress.

### 3. *The Direction.*

The friendly but serious control of the way by which the child will have tried to be faithful to his resolution will be the very natural means of inaugurating a certain « spiritual direction » of the deficient. In general he is quite capable of this.

The mentally deficient child becomes easily attached to his confessor, happy to have found someone who understands and loves him, happy to be followed by someone who takes him seriously and on whom he can count.<sup>1</sup> The deficient is faithful and delicate in his affections, grateful to whoever wishes him well, desirous to show

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1. The confessor must also be faithful, keep his promises, and be on time.



himself worthy. All this will facilitate a regular and profound work, a slow but a solid progress towards an authentic Christian perfection.

#### 4. *Towards Sanctity.*

Little by little, the deficient child, who lives in the sensible, will learn to sacrifice the immediate and concrete pleasure for a superior and spiritual goal. That is, of course, difficult for every child — even for every human —, but however, this is particularly repugnant to the deficient. On the other hand, he is more simply generous and spontaneous, without artifice, calculation or pettiness. Could he not then have his own type of sanctity ?

### CONCLUSION

As can be seen, the access of the deficient children to the Sacrament of Penance requires a particularly attentive long-range and immediate preparation. There are two excesses to avoid : to refuse to these children the benefits of this Sacrament, and to administer it to them without their being in a state to make good use of it, (with even the risk of hurting and discouraging them).

This preparation requires the close cooperation of the educators (parents, catechists, specialized teachers) and the priests, the ones and the others having received the appropriate warnings. Each one should of course remain in his role, and especially guard a perfect discretion as regards the child, at the same time acting simple and relaxed.

Let this preparation not frighten our readers. It seems very long and very delicate : but is it not worth the trouble generously consecrate ourselves to it ? Parents or teachers of the deficient dispense treasures of astuteness and patience to teach them to eat their soup, to tie their shoes, to read and to count... Can we not use as much ingenuity and perseverance to form their consciences and to teach them to learn to confess themselves in order to receive the Sacrament of Mercy and Pardon ?

We are in the order where there is no price. A whole lifetime of efforts would be justified by the least advance of one of these children in the way of grace.

# Undergraduate Studies in Sacred Doctrine at One U.S. University

by Gerard S. SLOYAN

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It has been suggested that the program of sacred studies in the undergraduate schools of a particular American university might be of interest to European readers, and even to fellow Americans. The opening pages of *Lumen Vitae* (Volume I, 1945, 18-36), contained an article by the Right Reverend John M. COOPER of *The Catholic University of America* on the needs and possibilities of undergraduates in a four-year sequence, but without special reference to Cooper's own university. Numerous changes have taken place in the worldwide university community since that time. The self-examination by Catholic higher education in the United States during the past few years is a matter of record. Even if the Cooper program in its general outlines had remained ideal (and there is good ground to think that it has not), there is every reason to scrutinize curriculums in particular universities to see what actual practice is, and how it is related to contemporary intellectual concern.

The Catholic University of America (founded 1889) is composed of Schools of Sacred Theology, Canon Law, Philosophy, Graduate Arts and Sciences, Law, Engineering and Architecture, Social Science, Social Service and Nursing. Undergraduate students of the arts and sciences, of the social sciences, and of philosophy if they are non-clerics, prepare for the A.B. degree under the guidance of a staff which is made up of professors and their associates from the three graduate schools concerned. This staff provides instruction in the « College of Arts and Sciences » under the guidance of an academic dean. For all practical purposes it is a School of the University, though most of its teachers — those in philosophy and the social sciences alone excepted — are members of various departments of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Undergraduates

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in this College, in the School of Nursing, and of Engineering and Architecture, receive their instruction from members of the Graduate School's Department of Religious Education. The latter are seven in number and an additional five persons are lecturers.

By university statute, the supervision of religious instruction in all schools and departments is the province of the faculty of Sacred Theology. Members of this School, however, have historically been concerned with their own undergraduate and graduate programs leading to pontifical degrees. The enrolment at the seminary level is sizable, the graduate class-load and direction of dissertations formidable. The burden of additional classes involving as many as a thousand lay undergraduates is more than they could hope to take on.

Partly for this reason, and partly because attempts by individual theologians before and after the First World War to lecture to lay students had not succeeded too well, a « Department of Religion » was formed in 1936. It was composed of five priests who until that time had been especially identified with this work. Two years later a somewhat expanded staff was constituted the « Department of Religious Education » and empowered to accept candidates for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. These students were preparing to be teachers of religion in the college and secondary school, masters of clerics and novices, directors of programs of religious instruction in dioceses or religious provinces, and so on. Because lay students in the college and teaching religious alike had had seminary-courses-in-English in the 20's and mid-30's, the spirit of the department in reaction to this trend was construed as anti-theological. Actually all that was being opposed was theology badly taught : a rationalism and refinement of terms that was ill-suited to the laymen who were being subjected to it. The record is not so clear that theology well taught was seriously considered as a response.

In any case, what we should now call an incipient attempt at the *kerygma* as core or « living theology » was then described by unsympathetic onlookers as homiletics in the classroom. Msgr. Cooper made his program widely known through the publication of a four-volume series of textbooks entitled *Religion Outlines for Colleges* (1924-30). They were precisely that : outlines. They developed very little formally and still less theologically, but they asked most of the right questions of the college males who were going to school in those years. Unfortunately, though the books might have spurred individual instructors to give good lectures, or intelligent students to do serious research into the questions raised, they did very little for the general run of students because of their

allusive character ; also, despite their other virtues they did not have their roots in rich theological soil. But since so little attention was being paid to the college teaching of doctrine in those years — the Jesuit-edited « Fundamentals of Christianity » series (1927-31) providing an exception — the manuals of Cooper made him for a good while *primus inter pares*.

Mention should be made of the fact that *The Catholic University of America* was a pioneer in requiring of Catholic students eight semesters of sacred doctrine study, of two classes weekly each semester. For these sixteen semester-hours sixteen credits were awarded. No devaluation was engaged in (e.g. one credit awarded for each two hours of class attendance), to make academic transcripts describe less demanding schedules than those which had actually been followed.

In general the student outlook on sacred studies may be described as ambivalent. They want a « good course, » by which they mean scintillating lectures without heavy assignments. Any department member who deals with them seriously is likely to be reminded that doctrine study is not the student's field of concentration, or that (in colleges where this is the case) it is only a two-credit course. There is some justification for the latter complaint. In the American system, six courses can be a normal « load » for undergraduates. Five of these courses will meet anywhere from three hours per week (languages, social sciences) to seven (physics). The religious educator who makes reasonable demands has the insoluble problem of discovering what comprises 67 % or less of the normal course requirement.

There is also the fact that classes in sacred doctrine are often populated by the general run of students to the last semester inclusive. The attritions normal in other disciplines through disinterest, and the improved instruction that comes about with a student's active choice of his courses and his heightened specialization, are simply not at work when all students must take every course. It is possible for a student to build *some* kind of theological edifice over the four-year period. It is not possible to build an academically impressive one because so many students do not care to construct any edifice at all. Forty students may gather in a classroom to hear a lecture on the sacramental nature of Christian marriage ; they may even do a careful research paper on the question. An hour later, however, they will be spending two or three successive hours around a seminar table with seven other upper-classmen and a professor. Profane studies, they naturally conclude, mean specialization. Sacred studies mean generalized interest.



It is evident, of course, that Christian life and the terms proper to it are in no sense an academic specialty. The biblical and theological study in which that life is analyzed, however, can be such a specialty. The question is twofold : can a presentation of the Catholic faith be made in such a way that the needs of all as young adult Christians are served ; and likewise the needs of those who by disposition and training think critically, historically, theologically ? Put a slightly different way, can theology as a liberal discipline be taught to those whose educational experiences are not in the realm of liberal learning ? A two-track scheme of major and minor courses is one answer, but an answer that few staffs have the manpower to attempt. A second response to the problem entails improved instruction through lightened loads of professors, more frequent weekly class periods, and a lesser « general » requirement ; all this plus the possibility of specialization for those who seek it.

In the academic year 1956-57 an interdisciplinary committee was constituted by the Rector of the University to study the undergraduate curriculum of the School of Engineering and Architecture. It was composed of the dean of that school, the dean of the College, and representatives of the departments of English, economics, philosophy, religious education, civil engineering, and electrical engineering. After four months of meetings a report was submitted which represented much compromise but final unanimity. Its chief purpose was to retain a sequence of liberal studies — up to 25 %, in fact — at a time when many pressures were at work nationally to eliminate them altogether or limit them to courses in « English for engineers » and « economics for engineers. » As part of this committee report the degree requirement in sacred studies for Catholics was reduced from eight semester-length courses totalling sixteen hours of credit to five courses totalling fifteen hours (three periods per week, therefore), with the possibility of electing a sixth course in the senior year. It was foreseen by the Religious Education Department through its member of the committee that sacred studies were on the point of being reduced by the vote of the group in any case. If this were to be so, it seemed better to achieve the reduction on good terms than on bad. Going from four to three or even two years of study could be a genuine advance for students if their academic experience were to be improved overall.

The acceptance of the report by the Rector made the foreseen changes necessary in all three undergraduate schools ; the students of the three schools meet commonly, and a double system of two-hour and three-hour courses was out of the question. The problem therefore was one of deciding which studies would be best for

students if they had only four, five, or six semesters of study instead of eight as formerly.

The sequence that had prevailed immediately before the change for all except nurses was the following : Old Testament, New Testament (chiefly the gospels), Dogma (two semesters), Morality (two semesters), the Church and the Social Order, and Marriage. It was not attractive to omit any of these treatments, yet the question was one of bowing to the inevitable and welcoming the improved terms upon which the smaller number of courses could be given. By vote of the department — part conviction and part realism as to the theological resources of the group at the time — the sequence arrived at was as follows : Old Testament ; New Testament (Acts and Epistles now subject to greater scrutiny, in view of the extra period per week) ; God One and Trine, Creation ; the Incarnation and Its Effects ; and a fifth and final required semester in which students could elect either the Lay State and Marriage (emphasizing « laicology » and apostolate), or Morality and Marriage, the latter a course in the virtues and states of life.

Five courses are listed above, which represents the number agreed upon with the dean of the College as closest to the former requirement of sixteen credits for graduation. Two additional benefits in the case of students of the arts or sciences were the fact that no sacred study would begin until the sophomore year, so that all students would have had some study of philosophy at the time dogmatic theology was begun in the junior year, and the fact that in the first semester of senior year some election of courses was possible and in the second semester unqualified election on the same terms as those which govern all electives in the College.

*Students of engineering and architecture*, as a result of the Rector's Committee report, take four courses instead of the College's five. No one on the committee was especially pleased that the total was less than that of liberal arts students, but without this reduction they could have no work in philosophy and far less in English and social science than the needs of professional men indicate. For them, therefore, an introductory course was instituted entitled « Sacred Scripture as a Theological Source, » a one-semester course of readings from both testaments coupled with basic principles of interpretation. The chief difficulty experienced by engineering students when they reach their dogma course as juniors is that by this time it is their only non-professional study. Standing almost alone as the liberal study of their program — a course in art or the history of architecture might comprise the other exception — it provides a major challenge to many with its references to history and philosophy and its (by this time) unique demands in

the area of reading and writing. The terms, in other words, are unequal as between concentrators in history or biology and engineers or nurses. All take the same sacred doctrine courses, however, as part of the University's hope that theology will serve as an integrating discipline in the lives of undergraduates. The balance is an uneven one as between the « verbalists » and the « symbolists, » but an aristocracy of intellect helps to set it right. This much is certain, that the representation of the various schools and departments has a liberalizing effect on all, whatever effect it may have on the pace of theological study.

*The students of nursing* received an important benefit in the reorganization scheme. Those who after high school begin their pursuit of the B.S. degree and registration as nurses had formerly had to break off their sacred studies after three semesters or six hours of credit. The transfer in residence from the university campus to a nearby hospital, with a series of new professional duties there, was the reason given for this. The practical result was that after theological consideration of the mystery of the Holy Trinity the students never proceeded to the Incarnation or soteriology or for that matter to any further formal study of revelation. By dint of persistent efforts by the dean of nursing and her student advisors, the nurses in this « basic program » now take the same sequence of four courses as the engineering students. Registered Nurses who seek a B.S. degree in two years of university study (after having been graduated from a three-year, non-collegiate school of nursing), take two courses, one in Scripture and one in dogmatic theology, as part of their degree requirement.

A final word needs to be said on the attempts made to insure the fitness of students for a program of college study. The bulletin of announcements (« catalogue ») states clearly that those will be admitted to their first credit-bearing course in sacred doctrine who pass satisfactorily a test of religious knowledge. This is an objective-type test of one hundred items, plus an essay on the nature and sanctifying role of the Church. The test is available in Spanish as well as in English. It is not couched in catechism language, and it has a biblical-liturgical bias. For this reason and because of the general character of Catholic secondary education in the United States the top scores seldom exceed the low 90's. A cut-off point is chosen on the basis of the performance of the group. Failures must pass a no-credit course entitled « Catholic Belief and Practice » which meets three times a week in the first semester. Students of the College may go above the five-course limit imposed upon them as freshmen in order to take it, so that they may enroll in the first course — the Old Testament — in the next autumn without penalty. One

section of the latter course is offered in the second semester each year to accommodate transfer students into the University and those in nursing and engineering who pass the no-credit course. The deans of these two schools regret deeply that their freshman students must follow more crowded schedules than other undergraduate students. The department regrets that this first year in college — often a transitional and turbulent one, and better suited to acquiring basic skills in scholarship than to mature study of the Scriptures — must contain 25 % of all their course work. This is followed in the case of engineers by an interim of three semesters before dogmatic theology is resumed. Professional courses required in the upper three years, are said to make this state of affairs unavoidable.

Below there is given an extended quotation from the catalogue of the undergraduate schools :

*The Department of Religious Education.*

Associate Professor Sloyan, Head of the Department ; Visiting Professor Vann ; Assistant Professors Ceroke, Stevens ; Drs. Byrne, J. L. Murphy ; Fathers Hovda, Ring. Lecturers : Drs. Balducelli, Palmer, Sr. Virgine.

All students of the undergraduate schools of the University except transfers from Catholic colleges will take a test of religious knowledge upon their arrival. Without reference to previous educational opportunity, students who qualify on the basis of their performance will be declared eligible to enter 105 or 201. Those who fail to qualify will be required to take Religious Education 5 (which carries no college credit). Students in the College of Arts and Sciences will begin their study of sacred doctrine as sophomores, students of Nursing and Engineering and Architecture as freshmen or upon their arrival. A previous reading of the following books should prove helpful in preparing for the placement examination :

*A Catholic Catechism* (Herder and Herder).

Doornik, Jelsma, Lisdonk. *A Handbook of the Catholic Faith (The Triptych of the Kingdom)* (Image).

Dyson and Jones. *The Kingdom of Promise* (Newman).

Kilgallon-Weber. *Life in Christ* (720 N. Rush St., Chicago, Ill.).

Knox, Ronald. *The Belief of Catholics* (Image).

Zundel, Maurice. *In Search of the Unknown God* (Herder and Herder).

Students of the College will take two semesters of work in Scripture, two semesters of dogma, and a fifth semester in moral questions or the lay state and marriage. They may elect further in the field when their requirement is completed. Students of the Schools of Engineering and Architecture and Nursing will take four semesters of Religious Education, preparing for theological study by a single course in Scripture. The sole reason for the lesser attention paid to sacred studies is that the demands made by professional preparation require an attenuated program.



The purpose of the sequence in sacred doctrine is to put students in touch with the fullness of Christian revelation through its sources and to introduce them to theological method as a means whereby they may acquire the habit of wisdom. Liturgical worship, ascetical practice, and apostolic action are presented as the fruit of Christian faith contemplated theologically. There is no program of concentration in Religious Education. Elective courses are available in the upper division for those who wish to pursue sacred study in depth.

5. *Catholic Belief and Practice.* (0)

The Bible. od's call to man in the redemptive love of Jesus Christ ; man's response. The Church. The Christian Creeds. The sacraments as signs of our redemption. The commandment of love ; the decalogue. The Lord's Prayer. Liturgical and private prayer.

103. *Religion in the Jewish and Christian Traditions.* (3)

(For non-Catholic students.)

The nature of religion ; primitive, revealed religions. The religion of ancient Israel. Catholic Christianity. Protestant Christianity. Modern Judaism. The meaning of Catholic beliefs, practices, discipline.

104. *Religion in the Jewish and Christian Traditions.* (3)

(For non-Catholic students.)

The nature of man in the Bible. The Providence of God in human affairs. The problem of evil ; of pain. The nature of virtue, vice. Virtue in domestic life and society.

105. *Sacred Scriptures as a Theological Source.* (3)

The Exodus. Moses the Lawgiver. Genesis XII-L. Genesis I-XI. The monarchy. Selections from prophetic and sapiential literature. Nature of the Gospel, oral and written. The Gospel as record of Christ's redemptive mission. His teaching on the Kingdom. The Acts and the emergence of the Church. The gospels and theology ; the gospels and Christian life. Inspiration and inerrancy.

201. *The Old Testament.* (3)

The formation of the Old Testament collection. Call of Abraham ; the patriarchal period. The Exodus. Moses the Lawgiver. The conquest of Canaan. Genesis I-XI and pre-history. The monarchy. Prophecy. Hebrew wisdom literature. The exile ; Hellenism ; the Maccabean revolt. Inspiration. Inerrancy. The O.T. and the sacred liturgy ; the O.T. and Christian life.

202. *The New Testament.* (3)

The Gospel and the gospels. Oral catechesis. The synoptic question. Purposes and style of each evangelist. Infancy narratives ; the Baptist's preaching. Galilean, Judean ministries of Christ. Parables and other teaching. Miracles as signs of His mission. Christ as Suffering Servant. Passion, resurrection, ascension. The emergence of the Church in Acts. St. Paul's mission, theology. The Church of the Apocalypse. The N.T. and theology ; the N.T. and Christian life.

301. *God, One and Triune, Creation.* (3)

The science of theology. Faith, reason and revelation. Sources of revelation. The knowledge of God from reason, faith, vision. The mystery

of the Trinity ; processions, relationships and appropriation. The notion of creation. The elevation and fall of man. Predestination and the salvific will of God.

Prerequisite : 202 or 105.

302. *The Incarnation and Its Effects.* (3)

The purpose of the Incarnation. Hypostatic union of natures in the Word. The Redemption of mankind. Sanctifying grace and actual grace. The prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin. Baptism and membership in the Church. The Sacrifice of the Mass.

Prerequisite : 301.

401. *Morality and Marriage.* (3)

The nature of human acts ; moral responsibility. The exercise of the virtues of faith and charity. Prudence, temperance. Laws governing preservation of life. Truth ; justice ; chastity. Ends of marriage. Morality in marriage and family life. Marriage and Christian perfection.

Prerequisite : 302.

403. *Spiritual Foundations of American Life.* (3)

(For non-Catholic students.)

The moral and spiritual values underlying American political, cultural and economic institutions. Selected questions from contemporary religious and social life.

404. *Spiritual Foundations of American Life.* (3)

(For non-Catholic students.)

The family as the basis of all social order. Marriage, a sacred human institution. Fidelity, stability. Emotional, intellectual, religious preparation for marriage.

405. *The Lay State and Marriage.* (3)

Sacramental principles governing lay state, lay action. The laity and the power of orders, *magisterium*, Church government. The laity and Catholic Action. Specialized fields of lay interest : mass media, the arts, government, business. Modern technological progress. Lay spirituality. The vocation to marriage. Sacramental aspects. Ends of marriage. Church legislation ; papal teaching. Family life. Christian family movements.

Prerequisite : 302.

506. *The Bible and Modern Criticism.* (3)

Nineteenth century backgrounds. Textual criticism, higher criticism. Modernism. *Pascendi gregis* ; decrees of the Biblical Commission. Form criticism. Source criticism. « Demythologizing » and the Catholic scholar. Progress of contemporary biblical scholarship in Catholic and Protestant circles.

508. *An Introduction to Patrology.* (3)

Concept of « fathers of the Church, » ecclesiastical writers. Weight of patristic testimony to Church's teaching. *Didache*, St. Clement of Rome, early apologists. Acts of the martyrs. Readings from Tertullian, Irenaeus, Cyril of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Augustine, Jerome.

510. *Selected Questions from St. Thomas.* (3)

This course will attempt a careful examination of several areas of

Thomistic theological teaching, chiefly from the Pars II\* II\*\* of the *Summa Theologiae*.

*Non-Catholic students* must take the prescribed four or five courses. In the latter case, since only four are offered, they may make up the deficiency from any field.

It should be mentioned in conclusion that certain members of the department entertain serious reservations about the sequence as it stands. One of them feels that a full semester of Old Testament study is too much, since it comprises 20 % or 25 % of the whole. Two are convinced that two semesters of dogmatic theology (about ninety lectures) are too little time in which to convey anything of the structure of that science. Two regret seriously that students may graduate from college without formal study in moral theology, should they elect — as many do — « The Lay State and Marriage. » Almost all feel that in six required courses rather than five in the College a more satisfactory program could be arrived at. The dissenters from this view see a greater benefit in election by the few than compulsion for the many. Only time will prove which view is right.

For their part the students, who have never been consulted on the question, would probably favor courses in Protestant theology, non-Christian religions, existentialism, or the theologies encountered in modern literature, over any traditional sequence. This is owing to the apologetic and theological character of their previous catechetical training. Since, however, the latter is not to be confused with serious biblical or theological study, the department goes forward undeterred with a theological sequence. Not all of the engineering students care for calculus, for that matter, yet their instructors are not inclined to identify their considerable exposure to secondary-school mathematics with adequate mathematical knowledge.

The full-time membership of the department is comprised of four secular priests, a Carmelite, a Benedictine, and a Stigmatine. The additional lecturers include another Carmelite, a priest of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, a Jesuit, a Dominican and a (sister) Mission Helper of the Sacred Heart. There is something to be hoped for from the catholicity of the group but even more from their varied university backgrounds (Angelicum, Gregorianum, Trier, P.I.B., Oxford, C.U.A.) and theological productivity. Perhaps the greatest advantage to undergraduate students lies in the fact that all but a few of their instructors are teachers of graduate students as well, and contributors to theological and biblical journals.

For when all is said and done, the quality of a department's performance depends chiefly upon two things : the quality of students admitted (and retained) at the university, and the scholarly acumen of the staff. An articulated program is a matter of large, not of small, importance ; but of greater importance still is the number of times students may expect a stimulating experience of mind and heart out of the total number of courses they pursue in a department of sacred doctrine.

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# Mission and Catechesis

An International Week, Eichstätt, 21st-28th July 1960

A report by Georges DELCUVE, S.J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels*<sup>1</sup>

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It would have been difficult to realize a more perfect harmony between the theme of the Congress, on the one hand, and the place and time chosen, on the other.

In the small Bavarian town of Eichstätt, statues of St. Willibald, first bishop established in 741 by St. Boniface, recall the times when Anglo-Saxon missionaries were the bearers in this country of the good news of salvation. This episcopal town was indeed the ideal place for a meeting the aim of which was to find the application of the results of the catechetical movement to the progress of catechesis among young and adults in the missionary world.

Moreover, it was the eve of the XXXVII<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress taking place in Munich under the motto « Pro Mundi Vita, » and the week at Eichstätt was a perfect introduction, a catechesis preparing for a more active participation in the Liturgy.

This coincidence was pointed out by Mgr. Aloïs Lang, President of the Missionary activities in Bavaria.

It was the task of Canon Brien, Director of the Institut Supérieur Catéchétique of Paris, to situate the work of the week with regard to contemporary mentality. For indeed we may speak of a mentality. The lightning progress of technical civilization compels us all to face similar problems in the sphere of catechesis, and demands a *personal, total* catechesis, with an *emphasis on the sense of commitment in this world*. These words call for explanation and justification.

*Personal catechesis.* — One of the fundamental characteristics of the technical and industrial era is the *depersonalization* which it imposes on individuals as well as on communities. For this reason catechesis must be *personal*. Why ? Because it must bring out anew in all its power the Christian tenet of communion between persons. For our faith introduces us into an eminently personal world, the only personal world able to hold

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its own against the forces of uniformization and depersonalization let loose by industrial civilization. This why our faith alone can bring salvation to the world. Our God is truly a living God : it is by a free design that He has created the world and called Abraham and his descendants to the Covenant ; by a free design of his love that He has allowed the presence among us of His living and eternal Word. It is also through the fidelity of His personal gift that Christ has snatched us from the separation of sin and drawn us by His Resurrection into communion in grace with the Eternal Father. Again it is by a free design that He has instituted the Church and allowed us to become, in her, through Her personal capacities for fidelity, members of His Body. Everything in Christianity, dogma, sacraments, ecclesiastical institutions, speaks to men of this personal mystery and fills them with its joy. Thus Christianity reminds them not only of their greatness but of the love of God for humanity and the sublimity of His grace. This is the personal reality which our catechesis must express.

*Total Catechesis.* — Another feature of catechesis demanded by our modern times is that it must reach the total man. For it must not be forgotten that technical civilization is the fruit of rationalism and that the latter *breaks up the internal unity of man.*

To a man thus divided, catechesis must *return unity* ; for its mission is to manifest the Christ who unites and creates peace. We must never forget that the truth of which we are the witnesses is not a mere certitude accepted by the intelligence, but also a salvation which liberates and directs the will, and a power of Resurrection which associates the body itself to the new life. The announcement of the Christian message cannot therefore be restricted to the intelligence, but must reach the deep desire, the will and the body. It must be for men a source of union in new communities, those of the Body of Christ. This is why catechesis, by means of which we transmit to men this message of salvation, must be total, and our one act of evangelization must aim at the diverse spiritual faculties of man, his collective existence and his corporal powers.

Modern man often imagines that his Christian faith has no relation with the world's progress, and inversely, that this progress has no meaning for his interior life. This results in a duplicate existence, in two impervious interior worlds, led by so many. Such a way of living reduces Christian faith to an individual and disincarnate hope, indifferent to the establishment of the Kingdom of God announced by the Gospel.

A catechesis worthy of its name may not accept this dichotomy ; *it must revive hope in man, and manifest the existing relation between supernatural goods and the worldly goods of which the technique leads to intensified production.*

This long quotation was necessary to throw light on the following speeches dealing with the *content* (kerygma : Christ the Saviour),

the *methods* or means (biblical, liturgical...), the *integration* of temporal and religious matter.

The masterly exposé of Canon Brien had created the atmosphere. Work could begin, though obviously not in a pretentious spirit despising the achievements of forerunners. In a well-informed speech, the President of the Assembly, His Eminence Cardinal Valerian Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, recalled the revival of modern catechesis, the progress of missionary catechesis, and traced the wide roads along which the speakers of the following days would lead us.

## I. KERYGMATIC REVIVAL, METHODOLOGICAL REVIVAL

The history of catechesis in the XXth century holds a lesson which Professor Arnold is fond of recalling. The first effort tended towards a renewal of methods based on psychology and pedagogy. Results, though not negligible, were disappointing. Paradoxically, success was obtained, «in the bargain,» thanks to a thought which bore on the *content* of the message, thanks also to a return to the *sources* of revelation.

1. *Kerygmatic Revival*. — Made wise by history, members started by the study of the *content* of the message.

What do we mean by «missionary catechesis»? The *mission* of Christ was to *proclaim* the Good News of Salvation (the word «proclaim» translates the Greek verb *kêrussein*, hence the term *kerygma*). When the *kerygma* has spread the faith, another stage begins: *catechesis*. It must consolidate faith. The believer becomes a catechumen. Catechesis, in the traditional conception of the Church during sixteen centuries, is a supernatural religious education.

Drawing on biblical and historical sources, Mgr. Larrain resumes as follows the *characteristics of a missionary catechesis*: concentration on the essential, vital dynamism, well adapted and attractive method.

*Concentration on the essential*. — Christian initiation determines not only the personal conduct of the catechumen but the reception of the message by the environment.

The initial Christian instruction must possess such wealth and solidity that it is able to preserve its initial vitality and overcome the obstacles to its expansion. It must therefore distinguish between the essential and the accidental, accentuate the fundamental truths, manifest the intimate unity of these basic truths.

*Vital dynamism*. — The second characteristic of missionary catechesis is vital dynamism.

A leading theme of the Bible is the «conversion of heart,» in other words, in depth, by which man puts all his trust in Jesus Christ, Lord

and Saviour. To prepare this «metanoia,» our doctrine must be presented as an aggregate of *values*, and not only a catalogue of duties. This is the only type of teaching liable to communicate the vital dynamism which is to convey the message.

*Well-adapted and attractive method.* — An *adapted* catechesis means a catechesis rooted in the life of those who are taught, close to their desires, their anxieties, their problems, etc. It must be adapted to the different milieux: workman, peasant; it must be psychological, in other words appropriate to the mentality of its audience; this adaptation makes its realism. The missionary catechesis will be a dialogue, not a dispute, and this involves the respect of civilizations, cultures, social groups. Thus will the missionary catechesis be *attractive*.

Mgr. Larrain made a distinction between kerygma and catechesis and described the characteristic features of the latter in the missionary field.

Rev. Father Grasso took us to the heart of missionary preaching also called «kerygmatic preaching.» These terms cover a unique reality: the first stage of the communication of the Christian message to non-Christians. This differs from catechesis which is the initiation of converts who have already accepted the kerygma and are about to become members of the Christian community. It differs also from the homily, or liturgical preaching, reserved to adult Christians.

His quest for the heart of the kerygma leads Father Grasso to enquire also into the heart of catechesis, for preaching is not limited to the kerygma, but must develop into the catechesis.

Is it a study reserved to a few specialists? No indeed! Having determined the central element of missionary preaching, we shall compose a *synthesis of all the aspects of Christian reality under a unique light and assign to each its place in the general plan.*

This points to the importance of the conclusions reached by Father Grasso at the term of a thorough study of the New Testament, in particular of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul.

1° the kernel of the kerygma is Christ;

2° the kernel of the kerygma is not only Christ, but Christ seen in the history of salvation;

3° Christ is the life-blood, not only of the kerygma, but of the catechesis of the New Testament;

4° Christ in the history of salvation is the centre of all the teaching and all the liturgy of the primitive Church.

Regarding the «content» of the teaching, a delicate question occurs in mission lands. What must be the attitude of the missionary towards «paganism»: *negative or positive*? Will he condemn it wholesale? Or on the contrary will he make distinctions and retain certain elements which appear as providential preparations, stepping-stones? Rev. Father Buhlmann, O.F.M. Cap., is in favour of the second attitude.

Christ Himself, he says, shows us by his attitude towards the Old Testament how we are to proceed. His message is far above the Old Testament, yet he links it with the Old Testament. His teaching to the



Jews can be summarized thus : all that has been prepared, announced and foreshadowed in the Old Testament is now accomplished in the person of Christ and the Christians. Of course, paganism is not a preparation on a par with the Old Testament, yet it is in its own way. Clement of Alexandria, the first Christian scholar, has clearly expressed this thought. According to him, all true knowledge is ordained in view of the Christian revelation : the Law was the teacher of the Jews, and philosophy prepared the Pagans to the knowledge of Christ. We are therefore not dealing with a successful policy of integration of paganism into Christianity, we are following the design of God, the will of His Providence.

2. *Methodological Revival.* — This was dealt with by Dr. Klemens Tilmann, one of the chief authors of the « Catechism for the dioceses of Germany. » The lecturer reviewed the stages of the history of catechesis. Rightly, he insisted on the last stage : the kerygmatic revival of which he indicates the three phases : scriptural, liturgical, catechetical. His report was clear and well-informed, particularly with regard to German developments. Dr. Tilmann revealed himself as the profoundly religious educator, and we deeply appreciated his remarks on the relations between catechesis and education, and prayer and contemplation.

As was done for the content, the general exposé was followed by *observations relative to Mission lands*. This had been entrusted to Rev. Father Denis, but the latter being retained at his post by recent events, his report was read by a young African priest, and was much enjoyed. After a brief study of modern methods, Rev. Father Denis presented a collection of « existential » observations grouped in two panels : « advantages of modern methods in Mission lands, » « difficulties. » We shall return with pleasure in the Minutes of the Congress to these subtle remarks on the advantage, in African catechesis, of a recourse to the Bible and the Liturgy, as well as the disadvantage.

It would be equally difficult to summarize Dr. Goldbrunner's lecture on : *the catechetical method at the service of the kerygma*. Under a few titles : the message, the audience, the effects of the message the speaker gave pedagogical advice which he himself applied in a kind of model lesson on the life of grace.

## II. BIBLE AND CATECHESIS, LITURGY AND CATECHESIS

1. *Bible and Catechesis.* — His Lordship Mgr. Elchinger began by establishing solidly the *superiority and the necessity of a catechesis with a biblical basis*. This superiority is threefold : doctrinal, pedagogical, pastoral.

*Doctrinal superiority.* — We have to teach the Good News of Salvation, in order to introduce into the reality and the mystery of Salvation.

Obviously Salvation is not a collection of notions and of laws. It is not an extra-temporal reality. It is a sacred history *by* which and *in* which God has chosen to effect our salvation. We must therefore, when we bring salvation to our faithful, integrate them into the movement of this history. And where do we find the outline of this design of God, if not in the Bible, from Genesis to the Apocalypse ? In order to awaken in the conscience of our young Christians the awareness of the intervention of God, can we do better than placing them, in one way or another, in contact with the book which relates the acts and the intentions of God ? The sacraments are there to introduce and maintain us in this Sacred History, and our vocation calls in its turn for our moral behaviour.

It is therefore the Bible which reveals the fundamental features of the Christian Mystery. In the Bible the Economy of Salvation unfolds itself.

*Pedagogical Superiority.* — What a difference there is between knowing someone by definition, or, on the contrary, *by* experience ! by contact with him ! The Bible gives us the experience of the way God acts with men, and reacts to men.

*Pastoral Superiority.* — It is not sufficient to assimilate knowledge to acquire faith. We must adhere to the revealed truth. Faith requires an option, a commitment. It is the choice of an attitude towards God. Hence the necessity of making known the call of God, which must provoke a personal, vital response on our part. Man faced with the very Word of God feels himself challenged, more directly than through the catechists' own intellectual interpretations.

Christian faith is not merely an option for Christ. Such an individualistic attitude would not be Catholic. We have to lead our catechumens into a community. Now the Bible is precisely the book of the community of the people of God. It is its charter. It is its code. In it we rediscover the sacred bonds by which we are linked to the numerous generations called by God before us. It is in its pages that we find the path followed by the marching people of God. The Bible is like the book of the family in which we learn to know our ancestry, the wonders accomplished by God in the past, and his promises for the future.

But *how* to apply a biblical catechesis ?

However important it is not to minimize the historical character of Revelation, the History of Salvation must not be reduced to a series of facts. What matters is the reason of their connection, the intentions of the invisible Actor who constantly intervenes. A simple historical tale cannot bring them into light. We are teaching not only the History of Salvation but the Economy of Salvation, which must be presented, as often as possible, in its biblical context.

In conclusion, His Lordship Mgr. Elchinger gave out a few *pedagogical conditions for a biblical catechesis* : make a progressive use of biblical

texts, study these texts in a religious spirit, make the catechumens memorize an important choice of biblical texts.

This lecture was followed by a report by Dr. Fischer — precise but limited to the German sector — on: «*Experiences acquired in the elaboration of new catechisms and religious handbooks.*»

From this experience of one country, we passed on, with Rev. Father Ramsauer, member of the *Institute for Mission Apologetics* in Manila, to the laws and directives valid for any Mission land. Among the speakers of this Week, no one responded more fully, it would appear, to the expectations aroused on the first night by Canon Brien. *What are the requirements of a solid catechism for Mission lands, and how to prepare it?* In answer to this question, Father Ramsauer considered successively the *content*, the *methodical presentation*, of a catechism, and its *adaptation to the people it is addressed to*.

*Content.* — It can be resumed as follows: let our announcement of the faith, proposed in the catechism, become anew the *Good News of our Salvation in Jesus-Christ*, let our preaching of the faith reveal the *offer of salvation* which it contains the offer of God which invites our *response* and our *fidelity*, in order that salvation may be realized. What, objectively speaking, is always part of the divine message, is certainly included in modern catechisms. But the sum of these particular contents, resuming the whole divine offer of salvation, does not always throw it into a sufficient light. What in effect is the usual content of the catechism? A collection of truths to be accepted, of commandments to be observed under penalty of eternal damnation, and of means without which we may not enter Heaven. Thus is Christian religion regarded, as a burden which we must, whether we like it or not, take upon ourselves. Is this the «*Good News*» announced by Christ? (Mark, I, 24).

What is the explanation? Particular points of doctrine have been torn from the internal connexion in which they have been revealed by God. Now, only the sense of this relationship, the general view of the economy of salvation, give to particular truths their divine significance and reveal, without distorting it, the love of God who wanted so ardently our salvation that he sent His only Son into the world (Romans VIII, 32). It is only the failure of this synthetic vision of Christian doctrine which makes it appear as a burden rather than happy tidings.

Where is the remedy?

The invitation to believe will no doubt contain a series of revealed points, because of the supernatural character of faith. But the transmission consistent with the divine message and the fidelity demanded by St. Paul (I Cor. IV, 2) require that we do not content ourselves with a complete enumeration and an analysis of details, but that we underline as much as possible the value of the *universal invitation of God to Salvation, to the participation in His life in beatitude*.

Consequently, catechisms in Mission lands must even more than those of Christian countries present the message of faith in its essential features:

1) Christianity is a *message of salvation* : It is not sufficient to state and to propose to the faith this central truth, it must inspire the whole catechism.

2) The Christian message implies two things : the *invitation* of God to which corresponds, on our part, the *act of acceptance*. This fundamental structure must also be clearly seen in the general scheme of the catechism.

3) The character of the message of salvation : an invitation which in order to become manifest requires our acceptance ; this must be conveyed by the catechism in such a way that an instinctive, *dynamic appeal* is felt : a call, a promise, an inducement, something which demands a decision. When this character of salvation dominates our preaching, it becomes necessarily the Good News, the Gospel.

*Methodological presentation.* — The form must be adapted to the content.

Our task is to present, not a series of particular truths, but the *total economy* of God, within which these particular truths are organically inserted, and from which they draw their full sense. A text consisting of questions and answers is therefore to be avoided as it is an obstruction to a general view.

Moreover, this universal economy of God must appear unmistakably as His *design of salvation*, striking, moving, so that not only the intelligence is convinced, but the will, the *appetitive power*, is touched, and man not only knows the truths of Revelation, but responds with magnanimity to the divine invitation. To this end, it is good to make use, in the handbook as well as in the oral teaching, of the formal degrees : « Presentation » — « Explanation » — « Application » — which provokes a decisive step, corresponding to the psychological process, basis of human action.

*Adaptation to the people we evangelize.* — In order to adapt itself to the particular needs of Mission lands, the catechism :

- will take care of primary instruction,
- be addressed to adults,
- who often have been raised in an ancient (non-Christian) culture
- and who, as Christians living in pagan surroundings, will have to fulfil a particular apostolic mission.

2. *Liturgy and Catechesis.* — I shall not dwell on this Week's contribution on the subject, not because I fail to appreciate its importance, but simply because last year's Week at Nymegen-Uden had taken a decisive stand.

But it was a pleasure to hear His Lordship Mgr. Blomjous recall the interdependence of liturgy and catechesis : On the one hand, liturgy has a kerygmatic value ; on the other hand, it requires religious teaching, catechesis. One of the objectives of recent liturgical reforms is precisely to render more efficacious the catechetical mission of the liturgy.



### III. HOW TO WIN OVER THE UNBELIEVERS, HOW TO INSTRUCT CATECHUMENS

1. *The problem of approach.* — Rev. Father Spae, C.I.C.M., Director of the Centre of Pastorate of Tokyo, was marked out by his known scholarship as well as his missionary experience to deal with the problem of preparing individuals and masses to accept the faith.

He divided his subject in three parts: the *subject*: the precatechumen (individual or group), the *object*: Christ, the Church and their message of life, the *relation* between the two: a few of the means at our disposal.

An original feature which added to the interest of the lecture: Rev. Father Spae stressed the way of approach to the masses, rather than to individuals, the approach made by the Catholic community rather than by the individual Catholic.

*The subject: the pre-catechumen.* — The conversion of an individual or of a nation is simply the discovery of their true vocation. Missionary activity consists in helping them to discover this vocation. Properly speaking, it is God who effects the conversion. To achieve His purpose, God uses the efforts of His apostle, « His messenger, » and those of the convert, « to whom He sends His love. »

The pre-catechumen, individual or group, is not an abstraction. The mentality and the culture of a people, such is the soil on which his supernatural vocation must grow. Hence the importance of a careful attention to and a respectful regard for individual or national characteristics.

All nations possess innate Catholic attitudes. We must discover them and build on them in our first contact. These very attitudes, ennobled by supernatural life will acquire a new « bearing, » and finally blossom out into this « native » Christian culture, which is the splendid heritage of a Catholic people. In other words, there is a hierarchy and a method in the manner of presenting things, which deserves our respect.

Rev. Father Spae illustrated these remarks by some applications in Japan.

*The object of the message.* — We must of necessity collaborate with grace in the growth of the love of Christ and His Church. God has given us the spiritual equipment required for this task. We — the universal Church, the priest, the local community, the individual Catholic — we are the « prefigura Christi, » and the visible incarnation of the benignity and humanity of the Lord who seeks to reach those who do not know Him.

It is essential to reveal to the catechumen the whole Christ, even though progressively. While all information must be exact, it cannot be complete at the start. The first impression is of great importance. It would suffer if met by a slogan like: « we do not eat meat on Friday, » or « we are against contraception, » or « priests do not marry. » Rather must the pre-catechumen, at the outset, be gently attracted by the

fundamental character of our religion : we love God above all things, and we love one another.

There is also a *negative* pre-catechesis : it avoids creating a wrong impression. A just measure must be observed in all things, in particular when our work is sustained by foreign personnel and capital ; otherwise our spiritual message will be obscured, the personal contacts will disappear, caught in the wheels of institutions, and the proper human note will be lost. *Cor ad cor non jam loquitur*. We must avoid rivalry in secular matters and concentrate on the essence of our vocation : remain witnesses of truth, channels of grace.

The work of the pre-catechumenate would be much easier, if we possessed a *pre-catechism*, a book to be written not as a manual, but as a Gospel ; a book centred on the life and personality of Christ, not on the organization which He created. A book which would : be filled with the light and love contained in His message, not with objections which can be made to it ; formulate intuitions and not only notions ; reach the person and remain on a world scale ; be existential and yet transcend, as Christ, the particularities of a nation ; truly reflect the image of Him who is this unique Chinese, this Hindoo, this Bantou, this unique Japanese, this « *homo toto terrarum orbe diffusus*, » who wins everyone's respect.

*How to spread the message ?* — We must establish contact. We must resolutely throw down the barriers of language and customs. This begins by an unreserved acceptance of the other's personality. In other words, our intellectual acceptance of national characteristics and personal idiosyncracies must become effective, and this, unfortunately, is sometimes absent from the relations between apostolic workers themselves, between the missionary and the native clergy.

Pre-catechesis is the *work of lay-people*, taken individually or as a community. It is an essential feature of Christian life that it must be spiritually diffused by all. A sane spirit of conquest is necessary. When this spirit is inspired by the true sympathy mentioned above, when it seeks to meet others on their own ground, to be of use to them, it will lead to the discovery of Christ. In the missionary field, the rôle of the priest is, so to speak, on a vertical plane : he is the dispenser of God's graces. The rôle of the lay worker is on the horizontal plane, that of human relations ; all contact with other men must be sanctifying. What good could be accomplished if we made a systematic use of these contacts to make Christ known !

In this effort to *reach the masses*, we must not ignore the means of communication with them : the press, the radio, television. This type of apostolate requires a technical preparation as well as an apostolic preparation.

In conclusion, Rev. Father Spae set forth a plan for the foundation of an *Institute for Intellectual Apostolate*, in response to a wish expressed by HH. John XXIII in the *Encyclical Princeps Pastorum*.

2. *Instruction and training of adult catechumens.* — Rev. Father Brugisser began by a reminder of the aim of the catechumenate : to introduce into Christian faith and life. Such an introduction has two aspects : a *catechetical instruction*, a *religious formation*.

The *instruction* must not disdain to use the « providential preparations » provided by native culture. With regard to method, the suggestions made in preceding lectures will be found useful, provided the following points are kept in mind :

- the instruction of adult catechumens must be as *simple* as possible ;
- it must be *vivid* and *varied* ;
- our teaching must be *personal*, and develop the sense of responsibility ;
- with regard to memorization, we must take into account psychological possibilities.

Three principles must guide us in the matter of religious *formation* : let us give them time, build gradually, teach them to learn as they act. Rev. Father Brugisser applied these principles to two particularly important subjects : initiation to prayer and sacrifice, initiation into the new community and the apostolate.

It is difficult to consider all the aspects of the religious training of catechumens, and this brief summary bears testimony to the wealth of the matter dealt with. We would have liked, however, to hear more about the institution itself of the catechumenate.

#### IV. CATECHETICAL FORMATION

1. *Catechetical formation of parents.* — Let us not forget that home training plays an important part. An enquiry carried out in the South African Union and Basutoland is enlightening. Sister Pia of Marianhill, after examining three hundred answers, reaches the following conclusions :

— The failure of parents to give any home instruction and training is clear from the fact that half the Catholic children who enter school do not even know how to make the sign of the Cross ; a third have learnt no prayer. Very often African parents admit their inability to instruct their children.

— Family prayer is neglected. Only about a tenth of the children say their prayers with their mother ; half have to say them alone ; an average of thirty to forty per cent do not say any prayers at all.

— Parents hardly prepare the children to their first confession and their first communion.

— Too little importance is attached to the sacraments in family life.

— Liturgical times are not marked by any special custom, any personal effort. Even Lent, time of penance, is spent like the rest of the year.

— Very few parents manifest any interest in the religious instruction of their children.

After stressing the importance and the special tasks of home training,

Sister Pia examines the question : *How to help the parents to fulfil their mission better ?*

The whole formation of parents, from elementary school onwards, and particularly during the time of their engagement, should be a preparation. This, however, does not solve the problem of the *catechetical* formation of young couples. In the diocese of Marianhill, says Sister Pia, a solution has been found : Professors, married women, members of Catholic Action, who have attended catechetical courses, have been asked to pass on their newly acquired method of teaching to the mothers at their monthly meeting. A more extensive use of African Sisters in the family apostolate is also under consideration.

2. *Formation of missionary Sisters and lay catechists.* — The urgent need for religious and lay catechists had been amply emphasized. In the following paper, Rev. Father Jacquemart, M.E.P., Regional Superior at Bangalore, after a few words on the problem of recruiting, insisted on the spiritual formation of these indispensable auxiliaries. He summarized the ideal aimed at in these terms : fidelity to the divine message, to the Church (priest, bishop, Pope), fidelity to the Holy Spirit, fidelity to Christ.

« Holy Church possesses, if I may say so, three successive recensions of the divine message: the first under its original form in Holy Scripture; the second, lived and meditated, in the Liturgy; the third, assimilated, analyzed, synthetized, in theology. »

This definition fails to throw light on the part played by Christian life, inspired no doubt by the Liturgy, but also lived outside the Liturgy. But Rev. Father Jacquemart, on the basis of this division, successfully gathered suggestions inspired by experience and reflexion under the following three titles : Biblical initiation and formation, Liturgical initiation and formation, Theological formation. He concluded his paper with considerations on pedagogical and practical training, and on « Canonical Mission and perseverance. »

## V. CENTRES OF CATECHETICAL APOSTOLATE

From theory to practice, the way is sometimes long ; it is not always covered. Hence the importance of efficient centres of catechetical apostolate, able to promote a sane organization of work.

His Grace Mgr. Marc Copu, Archbishop of Haiderabad, responsible for catechesis on the National Episcopal Indian Committee, gave a very studied report on the advantages of catechetical centres on a diocesan, national, regional, international plane respectively.

*Diocesan plane.* — The bishop, according to divine institution, is Pastor and Doctor. Canon Law therefore places on his shoulders the responsibility for religious instruction in his diocese. On the other hand the decree « *Provido sane consilio*, » promulgated in 1935 by the Sacred



Congregation of the Council, recommends to Ordinaries the foundation of local Bureaux which, under their direction, will supervise all the catechetical work of the Diocese.

The Bureau will mainly exercise a *control*: approval of the choice of professors, books and programmes.... Moreover, it will, according to the wish of the 1950 Congress, seek to «organize, promote and bring to perfection the whole catechetical institution.» It will help individual workers, but also, following the recommendation of the decree of 1935, assemble Congresses, open courses, etc.

The name of «Diocesan Bureau» tends to increasingly imply «Diocesan Commission for the Study of Catechesis» (with separate committees), and a «Diocesan Secretariate» or «Centre.»

*National Plane.* — The results of the catechetical universal movement are studied and adapted to the needs of the nation. The National Centre will help the diocesan directors by more important publications (notably a Bulletin), the organization of courses and sessions.

*Regional Plane.* — In large countries like India, a national Centre cannot answer all needs, in all the languages spoken by the people. Regional Centres established on a linguistic basis are therefore opportune.

But where must the *qualified personnel* of these institutions be trained ?

«I hasten to add, answers His Grace Mgr. Gopu, that we have means to train specialists. Several countries have a catechetical course. In Rome, the Institute «Pastor Angelicus» prepares priests in all the branches of pastoral theology. The «International Catechetical Year» organized by the Centre «Lumen Vitae» in Brussels has for us a particular interest: the shorter course (October to June), a body of highly competent professors, the organization of study circles and the importance attached to personal work, guarantee a sane theoretical formation, centred on the essential, and moreover fulfilling the needs of the Missions. In addition, numerous contacts, both in Brussels and in important European Centres of catechetical and pastoral action, are of great value for the future Directors of religious instruction.

» The existence of the «Catechetical Year» — realized by the Centre «Lumen Vitae,» one of the officially recognized «International Catholic Organizations» — bears testimony to the importance and the advantage of the cooperation between National Centres. We can all greatly benefit from the work of the Centre «Lumen Vitae.» We have, on the other hand, catechetical problems which are our own. Why not have our International Missionary Centre of Catechetical Apostolate ? In fact, we have it. Rev. Father Hofinger and his collaborators in Manilla have already rendered precious services. I feel sure that a co-operation of all Mission lands with Manilla would contribute to the progress of the catechetical movement in the missions.»

## VI. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CHRISTIAN COUNTRIES AND MISSION LANDS

This subject had been entrusted to the International Centre for Studies in Religious Education («Lumen Vitae,» Brussels). The main points dealt with were the following :

If missionary catechesis and catechesis in Christian countries are to be of mutual help, then the missionary spirit must prevail in our proclamation of the faith. This is an essential feature of this study, at least if we consider the problem in all its breadth. We must not be tempted to reduce it to a few practical devices, even if these must have our consideration elsewhere. We must keep in mind two planes on which collaboration must take place. The first is in the *direction* : mutual aid in orientations, collaboration with the view of constant progress in the discovery of the finality, the methods, the spirit of catechesis. This prepares the second on the plane of *realization*, preparation of messengers, support of their action.

1. *Mutual help in direction.* — What support can Christian countries give ? Two. On the one hand a work of *reflection* on the life of the Church and the life of men ; on the other hand an application of these reflections, an *experience*. These two things are closely associated. The proclamation of faith in Christian countries can help the proclamation of faith in mission lands by the outcome of a prolonged study of the message of God and its expressions, of man, of the methods best adapted to the transmission of the message : in concrete terms, by initiatives, handbooks, books and reviews inspired by liturgical and biblical movements, works on religious psychology and sociology, and above all, catechetical institutions and handbooks. The proclamation of the faith in Christian countries is particularly suggestive when it is in harmony with the entire life of the community, in contact with Christian life. To define it in one word, one would like to choose the word : *incarnation*.

What now is the contribution of *mission lands* ? In comparison with the word «incarnation,» I should like to use when speaking of the proclamation of the faith in mission lands the word : *dynamism*. It applies to the three sectors in which is exercised the reflection of Christian lands : the message of God and its expressions, man, the transmission of the Good News. It is in this domain that it can render an inestimable service to the proclamation of the faith in Christian countries : it prevents a hardening, a fixation in a formula. On the one hand, by an effort at *detachment* it restitutes to the Christian message its universal bearing ; on the other hand, by a work of *integration* of the native values of mission lands, it prepares new «incarnations» of Christianity.

One last remark before we pass to the second part : if on the map of the world it is easy to make a distinction between mission lands and «christian» countries, we must hasten to add that, with few exceptions,

all our dioceses, all our parishes are both mission and Christian grounds. What was said of mutual aid between the two blocks will find some application in the relations between the christian and missionary sectors within a parish or a diocese. A healthy eucharistic community will give rise to a catechumenal community, which will attract sympathetic members. From one group to the other, there is an exchange of services.

2. *Mutual aid in realization.* — As a prelude to this second part, we put forward three fairly important considerations.

First, it is closely linked with the first part, being so to speak the conclusions to the premisses.

Secondly, facing the immensity of the task, Christian realism does not consist in taking — for fear of imagination and utopia — small measures to solve great problems.

Finally, as a broad-minded view must be applied to world problems, here adaptibility is required. There exists such diversity in mission and « christian » countries, and problems vary according to persons, charges, etc.

The speaker proceeded with various suggestions concerning practical mutual aid, which lack of space obliges us to reduce to an enumeration :

- Common action to help Christians acquire the consciousness of their responsibilities with regard to the proclamation of faith.

- Common action to surpass partial knowledge of the faith and give a catechesis with a grip on the life to be christianized.

- Mutual aid in the catechetical and pastoral formation of seminarists and priests.

- Mutual aid towards a better knowledge of the mentalities to be approached.

- Mutual aid in the development of catechetical institutions.

- Mutual aid towards the foundation and growth of catechetical centres.

- Mutual aid in the domain of publications.

*Conclusion.* — Our first care must be to mobilize all Christian forces, in Christian countries and mission lands, in view of the proclamation of the faith. Among these forces, there are two which I have refrained from mentioning so far, in order to give them « the last word. » They are prayer and suffering : in other words, contemplatives, and the sick.

If it is true that the proclamation of faith in mission lands relies in a very special way on the action of the Holy Spirit, then the greatest contribution of « Christian countries » must be the establishment in mission lands of contemplative communities. And let us not forget that Jesus could not enter in possession of His Kingdom, could not send the Holy Spirit before He had endured the Passion. The mystery of Easter and the mystery of Pentecost have not ceased to be mysteries in action. Father Perreyve's word remains true : « Of all the forces which redeem the world, the Cross is the most powerful. »

## EPILOGUE. A FEW THOUGHTS

The last paper dealt with the collaboration between « Christian countries » and « mission lands. » *The Congress of Eichstätt personified this collaboration* : I cannot define it better. In writing this I refer less to the joint efforts of German and Philippine organizations, — yet so praiseworthy — than to the intellectual boon of such contact between the two groups of participants.

Beyond diversities — which no doubt it is more than ever important to admit — fundamental problems appeared similar. The fact of becoming aware of them was, for all, a help and a stimulant : all know that the *aim* of catechesis is the development of a mentality of faith ; all recognize that the *centre* of the kerygma and of catechesis is Christ in the history of salvation ; all are invited to return to the *same sources*, to follow the *same tracks* by which the mystery of salvation continues to reach us : Bible, Liturgy, doctrinal teaching, witness.

But it was equally useful to catechists of Christian lands — always tempted to accumulate knowledge at the risk of stifling the voice of the kerygma, always threatened with stagnation in a stale and lifeless presentation — to hear speakers insist on exigencies of catechesis which, though they may be more imperative in mission lands, are not to be ignored elsewhere : to concentrate on the essential, to present the good news of salvation, propose salvation and incite to a response, to adopt a form which corresponds with the economy of salvation, to build on « providential preparations »...

In return, missionaries were able to become familiar with catechetical experiments resulting from prolonged study and patient research. I refer particularly to the « Catholic Catechism for the dioceses of Germany, » and other works related to it.

Shall we conclude that perfection was attained ? In the course of the session itself, criticisms were made, which were not without foundation.

At times the work of theological reflection which had prepared the Congress, seemed deficient. Fundamental concepts of catechesis were ill defined and open to various interpretations ; the formulation of principles remained vague and controversial ; sometimes also, in questions of adaptation, empiricism would prevail over action based on theology. These impressions loomed up particularly during discussions relative to three documents distributed to the members on their arrival : *Basic principles of Catechesis*, *Directives of action*



*for the Catechist, How to compose handbooks of catechism.* The exchange of views — which normally was to bear on the reports of the lecturers — was almost entirely concentrated on these documents. Later on the dissension was more keenly felt.

With regard to the new catechism of Germany, it was natural that German catechists should present it, and all were pleased to hear about it. Perhaps they insisted a little too much on its merits? Perhaps they gave the impression that they imagined a few secondary modifications would be sufficient to adapt it to mission work? It was the opinion of certain members of the audience who felt a little impatience, more especially, as very promising experiments — carried out in Holland notably — were left ignored. The German catechism is a remarkable realization of contemporary catechesis, but the very trail it has opened for the benefit of all : biblical and liturgical trail, must lead to further progress, of which mission lands have particular need. It is therefore not advisable to erect as absolute norms the principles which have inspired its redaction or the composition of German handbooks of catechism for young children.

This being said, let us not take the tree for the wood : if, on some particular points, the sense of missionary adaptation has been in default, it would be unjust to minimize the desire often expressed for a very thorough adaptation to different mentalities, and to underestimate the contribution made by the Congress to the progress of missionary catechesis. At the close of this report, the reader will no doubt share this opinion with the greater part of the session members. It is too early as yet to foresee all the consequences of this Congress and of the friendly relations it has established.

Much was gained. A more supple organization would have improved matters. As at Nymegen-Uden, the preparation of the Congress was perhaps a little biassed, exchanges of view were rare, and, as mentioned before, foreign to the matter treated ; some moderate criticisms, inspired by the wish to contribute to the success of the meeting, did not always meet with the reception they deserved. This situation explains partly a few imperfections of the Congress : an occasionally excessive insistence on the « teaching » aspect of catechesis, a negligence with regard to the institution of the catechumenate ; the ignorance of several suggestive experiments in countries such as France, where the catechetical movement is so productive.

But what are those shadows compared with the great glow of light and charity which greeted us from the time of our arrival !

On the way from the station to the Seminary, I met two working girls going to work. They insisted on carrying my suitcase, and told

me how delighted they were to welcome so many bishops and missionaries. At the Seminary, one was « expected » : cordial hospitality on the part of the President and the professors, extreme willingness of the seminarists who looked after you in church, in the refectory, in the lecture hall, attentive devotion of the sisters in charge of the material organization. A high Mass which procured the experience of the Catholic Church assembled around the altar, receptions organized with the assistance of the people by His Lordship Mgr. Schröffer, bishop of Eichstätt, and Dr. Hans Hutter, burgomaster of the town ; nothing was missing.

And within the precincts of the Seminary, what unique encounter ! Nearly sixty bishops and a hundred and eighty priests, religious, laity. In private talks, the horizon widened, the mind became richer, one sympathized with a warm heart with so many generous intentions and so great apostolical sufferings.

After God, we have to thank very warmly the indefatigable Father Hofinger and the members of the Manilla Institute, His Eminence Cardinal Valerian Gracias who presided with such great tact, the Deutscher Katechetenverein which seconded Father Hofinger, the German Catholics, so kind and generous, and an international team of young catechists who contributed by their devotion to the success of this assembly which marks an important date in the history of missionary catechesis.

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# International Survey

# I. NEWS

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## AMERICA

### *Chili.*

**Revival of Catechesis.** — In the course of the last years, catechesis has taken an important place in the life of the Church in Chili, and considerable efforts have been made to raise it to the standard of its difficult mission.

In September 1959, the F.I.D.E. (Federation of Catholic Middle schools) concentrated its 8th Study Week on religious instruction. The work was divided between four commissions: *Catechesis through the liturgy* — *Catechesis based on the Bible* — *Catechesis through a systematic and doctrinal instruction* — *Religious formation of university students*.

The opening lesson, given by Rev. Father Fontaine, SS.CC., defines the theological foundations of a religious methodology. The first two commissions insisted on the necessity of a religious education on the basis of the Bible and the liturgy. They proposed a revision of present plans and programmes with this in view. The third commission stressed the urgency of training professors of religion for secondary schools, and requested the convocation of a congress on the theme: *the pastorate of adolescence*. The fourth commission reached the same conclusions, but on a university level. In short: give up notional and abstract teaching in favour of a more vivid and more «religious» education, throwing light on the Saviour, Gift of God, in His biblical expressions and manifestations, in the spiritual prolongation of His presence which we experience in the sacred celebration of the liturgy. In addition, the necessity for a serious preparation for the professorship, requiring in Catholic universities the creation of courses of religion and religious methodology for future teachers of religion in secondary schools.

In July of the same year, during the Episcopal Assemblies, the Episcopal Educational Commission constituted itself into the *Episcopal Commission for education and catechesis*, presided by His Lordship Mgr. Francisco de Borja Valenzuela. This commission formed the Central Bureau of Education and Catechesis (O.C.E.C.) to concentrate the total catechetical effort of the country. This organization's head office has a department for the preparation of new plans and programmes applicable to religious teaching in all its phases. At the beginning of this year 1960 was published the programme for the 2nd cycle of the humanities



(the last three years of secondary school). The publication of the programme for the first cycle is expected for the year 1961.

In May 1960, the Episcopate published a collective letter on catechesis and religious instruction. After insisting on the primordial importance of catechesis, it promulgated a series of decisions of which the most important were the following :

— The years 1960 and 1961 will be « national catechetical years » during which a great expansion will be given to the diffusion of Christian doctrine and the efficient, vigorous and modern organization of catechesis.

— During this period, the Episcopate will also organize a National Catechetical Congress followed by Diocesan Meetings. These sessions are expected to study and re-examine the whole catechetical effort and organization.

— A « National Catechetical Day » will be held on the Feast of the Ascension (« Go and teach »).

— The Bishops are invited to encourage the teachers of religion — or to order them in certain cases — to attend the courses for secondary professors in the universities of Santiago and Valparaiso.

— The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine will be re-organized and in action in all parishes.

In the Catholic University of Santiago, the Faculty of Theology, in collaboration with the Faculty of Philosophy and educational sciences has set on foot a *Superior Institute of Catechesis* on the pattern of the courses held at the « Centre Lumen Vitae. » It is a summer course, founded in 1959 by the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary at the University of Valparaiso, and transferred to Santiago in 1960. Its aim is to ensure the formation and improvement of professors of religious teaching in secondary schools. Its covers biblical, liturgical, patristic and doctrinal catechesis, religious psychology and sociology, Christian anthropology, history of catechesis, fundamental methodology, catechetical pedagogy, religious symbolism, religious music and the pastorate of adolescence. It includes also liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations, seminars, personal reading and study, as well as a first orientation for the work of the year. The results obtained during the first two years have been encouraging. The course is under the direction of the writer of these notes, himself a student of the first International Catechetical of « Lumen Vitae. » The professors were chosen among specialists in the various subjects dealt with.

Sergio TAPIA, A., SS.CC.

## EUROPE

### France.

*A New Catechetical Review.* — The first number of the review « *Catéchèse* » appeared in October of this year, an event we are happy to

underline. Taking up the succession of *Documentation catéchistique*, and ensuring the continuation of its task, the review *Catéchèse*, in a completely new spirit and presentation, seeks to meet the present requirements of the teaching of religion. Since 1942, when first the *Documentation Catéchistique* was launched, circumstances and climate have changed. It is no longer sufficient to supply catechists, educators and pastors with information and documentation; it is now necessary to establish bases of reflection on the various problem of religious instruction, and point out the way to be followed in order to exercise the act of catechesis with spiritual profit. Such is the objective of this review, for the «act of catechesis is the fulfilment, under mandate of the hierarchical Church, of an entirely pastoral mission: to transmit the doctrine of salvation in order to nourish the faith of believers within special conditions of persons, time and place» (No. I, p. 6). This aim demands an effort of thought, attention and constant adaptation, on the one hand to the content of the message, the better to bring out its essentials, and on the other to the persons and their actual possibilities of acceptance of religion. Study of sound doctrine, concern about pedagogy, and pastoral orientation, are the tendencies manifested by the review *Catéchèse* in its very first issue.

Published by the «Centre National de l'Enseignement Religieux» (19, rue de Varenne, Paris), under the theological and pedagogical direction of the professors and others in charge of the «Institut Supérieur Catéchétique de Paris,» the review *Catéchèse* is a quarterly consisting of about a hundred pages. It includes past and present catechetical texts, doctrinal, pedagogical and pastoral studies, catechetical news and facts, reviews of books and didactic material for the teaching of religion.

To such a serious well-orientated review, we extend our most cordial wishes for complete success.

LUMEN VITAE, *Brussels*.

### Spain.

**The Pontifical Institute «San Pio X» at Tejares-Salamanca.** — In Spain, the Brothers of Christian Schools have founded, mainly for the benefit of their own Congregation, a vast complex of research and education, at Tejares-Salamanca. Its first element, the private university centre «San Pio X,» was inaugurated on 12th October 1955. By a decree of 25th March 1960, the Sacred Congregation for Religious has raised this centre to the rank of Pontifical Institute and has approved its statutes for an experimental period of three years. This new Institute depends directly and exclusively on the Sacred Congregation for Religious and its chancellor is the Brother Assistant of the Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Schools in Spain.

Annex establishments give the Institute all facilities for affording the students a complete formation, and extend their influence throughout the country and even abroad. These «Annexes» number four: The «Cate-

*quética La Salle* » which organizes every year National Catechetical Days, and sends delegates to international meetings and Congresses. Among its numerous publications a «Curso Superior de Instrucción Religiosa,» and the «Fichero Catequístico,» deserve special mention. The «*Comisión Nacional de Teología y Catequética*,» composed of professors from the Pontifical Institute, organizes courses for the Brothers of Christian Schools unable to attend the Institute. For the practice of the students three *Pilot Centres* are provided: the «Centro Parroquial,» the free elementary school «La Salle,» and the «Centro Laboral La Salle» for middle schools. The students who have attended the four year theology course may be admitted to the «Instituto Superior de Catequética» for another two years. Finally an «*Escuela de Música Educativa*» trains the educators in the gregorian chant and the pedagogical and liturgical use of music.

In addition, the Institute has since January 1960 added to its activities the publication of a review for studies in religious pedagogy, under the title «SINITE.»

*Programmes and diplomas.* — The complete cycle is of five years. In the propaedeutic section, in the first year, students are taught a coherent synthesis of scholastic philosophy, according to the method and principles of Saint Thomas.

Catechetical teaching, particularly in the second and third years, aims at a thorough study of the subject of catechesis, of the best methods to be used, and of their adaptation to various ages and situations, in order to provide the catechist with a training applicable to any category or environment; this applies particularly to the lay religious teacher.

Theology is taught during the whole five years: presentation of facts revealed, research into the intimate reason of truths according to thomist principles, ascetic applications and catechetical orientations.

Diplomas delivered by the Institute on behalf of the Holy See are valid in the entire Church. The first diploma, obtained at the close of the third year, entitles the holder to teach religion in classes of elementary baccalaureat; by the second, obtained at the end of five years, the Holy See grants the student the title of «Magister in Ciencias sagradas» and enables him to teach religion at the level of the superior baccalaureat, in pre-university courses, teaching colleges.

*Spirit and ideal.* — The spirit and ideals of the Institute «San Pio X» are clearly illustrated by the motives which presided over its foundation. The Brothers of Christian Schools' prime motive was to respond to the wishes of the Holy See for a better formation of lay religious teachers, expressed in the decree of the Sacred Congregation for Religious. In addition, they have referred constantly to the directives and the example of their founder, who not only prescribed for them a daily and lifelong study of religion, but has contributed himself to the progress of catechetical teaching by composing eight catechisms.

Other circumstances prompted the Superiors to the creation of this

Institute. Legislative requirements and the necessities of our times have been the cause of a great progress in scientific, literary and technical studies. It was due to the dignity of religion to further the advance of theological and catechetical studies. It is evident that the mission of the catechist who is called to teach in the higher schools or the university, must nowadays have a first class preparation.

Finally, the convergence of certain facts and certain circumstances suggested a revalorization of the vocation of the Brother, lay religious, precisely by raising the standard of study, thus enabling him to reach the most specific aim of his vocation in the Church of God.

The Institute therefore came into being to ensure to the Brothers the most thorough and best adapted formation in their magnificent vocation of religious educators, and to promote catechetical studies, above all with regard to *school catechesis*.

Manuel Fernandez MAGAZ, F.S.C.,  
*Tejares-Salamanca, Espagne.*



## II. AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN TEACHING RELIGION

### RECORDS

#### *Meditations.*

GHEON, Henri. — *Le Noël sur la place*. Play in three parts on the five joyful mysteries of the Rosary. Pastoral and Music Record PM 300006 A. 33 speed, 30 cm. — This piece has so often moved French, Belgian and Canadian audiences since its first performance at the Arlequin theatre twenty-five years ago, that this recording needs no commentary, and will be welcomed with delight by many as an old friend. It is perhaps to the young only that a word need be said, advising them not to be surprised to hear strolling players acting the mysteries of the Childhood of Christ, but rather to choose one or other of the rôles in order to enter more fully into the joyful mysteries of the Rosary.

*Le message de Noël*. Presented by the Little Sisters of Jesus. Record Jericho JXI, 33 speed, 25 cm. — This record portrays the message of Christmas in speech and song. Both express simple and genuine piety. The Provençal story «*Le Ravi*,» for example, is a little gem. And what about the choice of songs? They will be welcomed as messengers from peoples, races and continents. They symbolize the unity of the human race in Christ. Not every detail is perfect in this record. We prefer it, all the same, in general effect, to one which, though more perfect, would be theatrical.

#### *Liturgy.*

*Office du soir*, like *Compline* for Sunday. Record Jericho JCp 5, 45 speed, 17 cm. — Set to original music composed by Anthony Milner, this Office has many commendable qualities. It is sung in unison which gives it the style of Gregorian chant. It differs from it in its adaptation to French rhythm. As a whole it is very prayerful and meditative. Many religious communities and parishes will adopt it gladly. The record can also be used for some teaching purposes, such as repetition.

#### *History and Life of the Church.*

*Évocation de Notre-Dame de Paris*. Sound effect by Pierre Baculard. Record B.P. Color n° 2502, 33 speed, 25 cm. — «*Wishing to reproduce the living witness of Notre-Dame de Paris in its different aspects and at all moments, the author has recorded all the sounds in the life of the*

cathedral, its carillon, its great bell, the Angelus from the enclosure, its monumental organ, the conducting of the choir, the Masses for two organs and two choirs, the singing of solemn processions among the crowd, its very silence, beneath the arches of a deserted vessel.... » We borrow this text from the producer's introduction on the record, which describes exactly what it contains. The recording certainly calls for the 102 coloured views projected. Yet the sound production alone suffices to make clearer the religious message of Notre-Dame de Paris, so wonderfully eloquent in stone.

### *Sacred Music.*

CARISSIMI, Giacomo. — *Trois histoires bibliques*. The judgment of Solomon. - The story of Job. - Balthasar's banquet. Interpreted by the Polyphonic choirs of Turin with the orchestra from the Angelicum at Milan, directed by R. Maghini and R. Lupi. Pastoral and Music Record PM 30002 M, 33 speed, 30 cm. — Behind these great oratorios rises the figure of Saint Philip Neri who, seeing in music « a means of drawing souls to the contemplation of higher things, » did not hesitate to appeal to the best composers of his day. A century later, the great Carissimi continued this original and efficacious form of apostolate. The very letter of the Old and New Testament finds expression by all the artistic means of that epoch : choir-singing, melodies, recitatives, duos, trios, instrumental symphony. « It is a spiritual theatre without scenario, and there is no difficulty in discovering the meaning, the imagery and the intensely expressive simplicity of the Bible. » These oratorios form a real pastoral in music, and therefore can be used even now for adult religious instruction.

COSSET, François. — *Messe brève Gaudeamus*, for mixed choir, in 5 voices. General choir direction by R. Fth. Martin of the Oratory. Pastoral and Music Record PM 17019 A, 33 speed, 17 cm. — François Cosset, French musician, and choir Master of the principal churches in France during the seventeenth century, was a very popular composer at that time. His *Missa brevis Gaudeamus* is French in inspiration, but in form approaches the work of Palestrina. The conducting of voices, the rich sonority, and the quality of the counterpoint make the artistic value of this Mass, which will enhance the repertory of any parish.

*Laudate pueri Dominum*. Choir of the Institut Saint-Grégoire-le-Grand, (Lyon Saint-Étienne) directed by Father Bouiller. Coll. *Écoles et Catéchismes*. Record Studio SM 33-68 (A), 33 speed, 25 cm. — This second record proves once again the usefulness of the collection « *Écoles et Catéchismes* » for religious instruction. We mean, first, the 6 Biblical pieces on the first side : the creation of Adam, Abraham's faith and obedience, the aged Simeon's « *Nunc dimittis*, » Christ the Wonder-Worker, God our Creator, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of angels and Mother of men — all themes to illustrate and stress lessons. The six pieces on the second side are sheer delight, and show up the advantages of the Ward method for child musical training.

**Liturgie et Folklore.** Record Studio SM 33-32, 33 speed, 25 cm. — A group of girl students from the Institut Saint-Grégoire-le-Grand, Lyons, show the advantages of Madame Ward's method in initiation to sacred music. Compline and the Antiphons to Our Lady are sung in the Solesmes tradition with enthusiastic rhythm. An atmosphere of recollection and prayer is maintained at the same time. The sonority is full and clear. Side A will be very useful for choir-practice in colleges and Institutes or parishes where plain chant is used. Side B gives a selection of songs interesting for girls from the Folklore of France, alternating with modern compositions. The freshness and accuracy of the voices achieve very good polyphonic music. We must add that the pronunciation is not always clear, especially when the rhythm accelerates.

### *Religious Songs.*

**Chansons pour le temps de Noël.** 24 Carols by the Élisabeth Brasseur choir. Two records in double folder. Record Jericho JC 1-2, 33 speed, 25 cm. Price 30 NF. — These ancient melodies from Brittany, Provence and other parts of France, provide an atmosphere of popular devotion, simple but *very* attractive. They will afford great pleasure on Christmas Eve and during Christmastide, both at home and at Youth Movement gatherings. These records have no didactic aim.

**Nouvelle ! Nouvelle !** Ten Christmas songs by César Geoffray, Marynie Rose, Robert Jef, sung by the Marcel Dumas vocalists. Pastoral and Music Record PM 25008 A, 33 speed, 25 cm. — Extracts from « Nouvelle ! Nouvelle ! 17 Noël's populaires » published by Chalet, these songs create the atmosphere of the feast exceedingly well, which is a very good reason for getting this record. Both text and harmony help towards recollection and a deeper understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation. This fine record will be chiefly popular in the home and in Catholic Youth reunions, but it can also be used occasionally for religious instruction.

**Les piroguiers du Congo.** Pastoral and Music Record PM 25005 S, 33 speed, 25 cm. — Saint Anne's Choir, French Congo, directed by Émile Oboa, sing four sacred songs — 3 for Christmastide, 1 for Lent — and seven secular songs. The sacred ones are inspired by African melodies heard in their villages, but the influence of Western hymns is not absent. Hearing this record, one is impressed by the naturalness and spontaneity of the voices.

### *Varia.*

**Le magasin du ciel.** N° 1. Behemoth, the hippopotamus — The harp. No. 2. The dove — The silver trumpet. Four inedited stories for children from 6-10 years. Pastoral and Music Record PM 17015 A - 17016 A, 33 speed, 17 cm. — Drawing inspiration from the Bible, these stories are intended for recreation. They are successful through poetical text, appropriate and pleasing music, and the talent of the story-tellers. These records are not strictly speaking sacred. The parallels they form with Scriptural stories, for example, the Deluge, David playing the harp

before Saul, only recall the events, without containing for all that, any religious message or moral lesson. It would be easy, all the same, to draw the child's attention to the Scripture, and draw certain conclusions from it, after the audition.

Ladislas PARTOS, S.J.  
and a group of *International Catholic Auxiliaries*,  
Brussels.

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*Addresses of firms mentioned in this article :*

Maison de la BONNE PRESSE (Pastorale de Musique. B.P. Color), 27 Bd des Italiens, Paris, 2°.  
JÉRICO. Centre du Disque Chrétien. 31, Bd Latour-Maubourg, Paris, 7°.  
STUDIO SM. 11 rue Perronet, Neuilly-sur-Seine.

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## PICTURES

### *Albums, Cut-outs, drawings.*

CORAZOLLA, Paul. — *Schaufenster Gottes. Wege der optischen Mission.* Düsseldorf, Verlag Haus Altenberg, 1959, 100 p. — This richly illustrated work is a manual and guide to the use of pictures in the religious education of the faithful. After evoking basic principles, we are introduced to the secret of drafting suggestive posters. Part II treats of printed matter : programmes, prospectus, invitations, parish magazines, etc. Part III is given to Exhibitions.

CORAZOLLA, Paul. — *Schaukastenwerkmappe 60.* Düsseldorf, Verlag Haus Altenberg, 1960, 12 pages of text, 35 photographs for 20 posters. The theme of this folder was chosen in view of the Eucharistic Congress at Munich, and is entitled : « Bread for the life of the world. » Posters made with the aid of these photographs bring out the essential points of the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist.

DE GUILHERMIER, L., S.J. — *Exercices pour le catéchisme.* Posters and pictures. Four cases : Salvation, the Passion, the Resurrection - Life of Our Lady - Mysteries of the Rosary - The Mass. Paris, de Gigord. — These posters present pictures in two colours on the subjects in question, executed by the nuns of the Abbey de la Roquette, with text providing spiritual commentary. The drawings, chiefly in outline, suggesting attitudes rather than picturesque detail, bring the child back to the essential. The pictures are to be placed in the right order with the text belonging to each. It is hoped that these pictures may prove a first introduction to contemplation. The sets can be used even with children who cannot read, and with bigger children up to twelve years. P. R.

LEPRETRE, Lucette. — *La plus belle histoire.* Album N° 2. The Birth of Jesus. N° 3. The Shepherds and the Magi. Paris, Éd. Fleurus, 1960. 6 pictures to colour. — Fine drawings, simple, expressive lines. These pictures can arouse true religious feeling.



### *Pictures — Small and Large Sizes.*

**CATECHETICA LA SALLE.** — *Explicación de la santa misa en láminas.* Madrid, Éd. Bruño, 1959, 20 small pictures with explanatory notes, 240 p. — Pictures and commentary on the principal moments of the Mass, for Primary, and the beginning of Secondary, Instruction. The plates in vivid colours can be obtained either small, 38 × 27 cm., or large 100 × 70 cm. The baroque style is not without dignity and force. In each picture the dogmatic theory is portrayed on the big screen over the altar. Notes on detachable pages provide explanations, liturgical, historic, doctrinal and practical, for each illustration. The whole indicates progress in liturgical teaching in Spain. Nevertheless, it is a pity that neither pictures nor explanations bring out sufficiently the chief lines of doctrinal synthesis in the Eucharistic mystery, as for instance, the action of grace and the movement of oblation of the whole Christ to God the Father. A. D.

**Documents Catéchétiques.** Quarterly publication directed by R. Fth. Papillon, O.P. 12-14 documents in heliograph, geographical, archaeological, liturgical, or artistic. Paris, Cefag, 1959-1960. Price of each series 7,80 N.F. — Intended to illustrate Religious lessons, C.A. reunions, study circles, these «documents» are valuable aids in Christian instruction. With 10-12 pages of text : general introduction, explanation of the photographs, Scripture References, Synoptic Tables, maps, plans, revision-schemes, these pictures rouse real scientific interest. Their special feature is their serious educational aim, seeking by careful choice to bring out essentials, as a guide in a first contact with each subject. Biblical times, the life of Our Lord, Church History, the Liturgy, are the great themes treated in succession in as many series as the subjects demand. N° for 1959 : 1. The Mass ; 2. Apostolic times ; 3. Baptism ; 4. Unity of Christians. N° for 1960 : 5. Christ's Passion (the Holy Places) ; 6. Priestly Ordination ; 7. The period of witnesses (II and III centuries) ; 8. The Liturgical Year. These religious albums cannot be too highly recommended to teachers of Religious Doctrine. The beautiful pictures will help them to give life and warmth to their instructions which mere abstract ideas can never supply. A. D.

**ISTREX.** — *Enseignement religieux.* Série « Histoire Sainte » (N° 101-111), et série « Éducation Liturgique » (N° 112-116). Each booklet consists of 8 pages, size 32 × 24,5 cm., with figures to cut out. Price for the series « Histoire Sainte » : 1200 F.B. ; for the series « Éducation Liturgique » 550 F.B. ; for the picture on flannel 660 F.B. Strasbourg, Éd. Pédagogie Nouvelle. Exclusive agent for Belgium : EDIFT, Bruxelles. — Conventional pictures reproducing costumes and customs of the period. Anxiety to avoid set faces, so as to rouse the child's own creative imagination is a fair ideal. Nevertheless it has deprived this series of inspiration.

**Les chemins terrestres de Notre Sauveur.** Plan by Gustav Franz. Drawing and production by Willi Harwerth. Kassel, Johannes Stauda-Verlag. For Belgium : « Lumen Vitae » Centre, Brussels. Price : on canvas with rods and loops for hanging : 750 F.B. — This large Biblical map in colour shows the principal scenes of Our Lord's life in modern

drawings. It is suitable for children from 6-11 years. Its size allows a clear picture of the Gospel episodes, and will help the children to localize the chief events of Christ's life in the Holy Land.

SEEWALD, Richard. — **Bibelbilder**. 5 Pictures from the Old and 7 from the New Testaments. Freiburg, Christophorus - Verlag - Herder. Price : 6,50 DM. Complete set : 65 D.M. — Doctrinal accuracy, didactic and artistic value characterize this collection. It will be useful for children about 11-12 years of age. These pictures form part of the one hundred illustrations of the « Bilderbibel » by the same author, published by Herder in 1957 (Price : 22 DM.).

### **Stop-films.**

**Le baptême.** Arrangement: Jean Buys, S.J. of the Lumen Vitae Centre, aided by R. Fth. Ch. Lagasse, rector of the parish du Christ Ressuscité, Tubize, and the Groups Notre-Dame. Two stop-films in colour (n° DC 200 ; 50 views in all) with a microsilicon record of 25 cm. Brussels, IVAC, 1960. Price of films : 350 F.B. Price of record : 200 F.B. — This new film on baptism and its accompanying record endeavours to bring out the full richness of the Christian doctrine on the sacrament. Going beyond the usual pictures of the ceremony, the author strives to explain by word and picture the full meaning of the rites, actions and prayers. In the first part, therefore, he describes the bringing of the child to the church, its reception by the priest and the Christian community, the exorcisms and consecrations. Part two throws light on the profession of faith, the act of baptism itself, the white robe and the lighted candle. The Sacrament concludes with the entrance into the church and the mother's thanksgiving at Our Lady's altar. We look forward with great interest to a similar treatment of the other six Sacraments.

HOUTLAND, Mark. — **Het leven van Jesus**. 7 coloured stop-films (N° 1002-1008 ; 20 views on each reel). Louvain C.P.O. Price 160 F.B. each reel, with accompanying text. — This film is meant for young people and adults, and invites contemplation on the life of Christ through Christian iconography. The choice of pictures, frescoes and miniatures is extremely successful. The colours give a sufficiently good idea of the originals. Commentaries in four languages.

**Lichaam, Kuisheid, Liefde.** — **Opgang naar het huwelijk**. Two stop-films in black and white (N° 1411 and 1413 : 42 and 39 views respectively). Hilversum, Instituut Lumen. The titles indicate the subject-matter : instruction on purity and initiation to marriage, adapted to the different psychology of boys and girls. These films are remarkable for their doctrinal value besides their didactic and artistic presentation. The scenarios of each are also registered on microsilicon records of 30 cm. (N° 1411-M and 1413-M).

**Peuple mon frère : Sœur Rosalie Rendu, fille de la Charité.** Text by Suzanne Cornillac. Illustrations by G. Delcausse. 4 Films in « Eastman-color » with booklet-commentary (N° 8527 to 8530). Paris, Éd. du Berger. Price : 38,40 N.F. — Both text and pictures portray a personality ruled

by her love of God and of her neighbour. Reproducing the extraordinary events of Sœur Rosalie's life, the author shows us Christian charity, which in her meant tenderness and strength, service, devotedness, forgiveness, humility and heroism — hence its value in catechesis. These films are also synchronized with records.

**Saint Vincent de Paul.** Two long stop-films in « Eastmancolor » (N<sup>os</sup> C 8531 to C 8532). Price : 28,80 N.F. (booklet-commentary included). — The tricentenary of the death of Saint Vincent de Paul has been the occasion of this beautiful production. We commend, above all, the scenario, realized by Suzanne Cornillac, under the direction of R. Fth. André Dodin, priest of the mission, specialist in St. Vincent's history and the seventeenth century. The principal events and endearing episodes which mark this extraordinary life, all work together towards Christian charity. They reveal the secret of the tireless apostle and bring us to the very heart of Christianity. The illustrations by G. Delcausse are very good. The excellent registering of the text, completely sufficient by itself, provides perfect accompaniment to the films.

**La Semaine Sainte.** Three stop-films in natural colours (N<sup>os</sup> C 8211 to 8213). Paris, Éd. du Berger. Price of the 3 films with booklet-commentary : 48,60 N.F. — These three films initiate the faithful very effectively into the liturgy of Holy Week, that is, to « the simple rite. » The symbolism of the ceremonies is made easily accessible to all, thanks to the remarkable pictures stressing in a suggestive manner the community-aspect of the rites, and to the rich and well-balanced scenario of M. le Chanoine F. Tribu. These films can be used equally well in schools and in parishes.

**VORSELAAR (Zusters van).** — **De Blijde Boodschap.** 5 sets of stop-films for children of 7-8 years. (N<sup>os</sup> 1009 K to 1013 K ; 22, 22, 23, 26, 18 views respectively). Louvain C.P.O. Price : 10 F.B. each. — The commentaries are printed in four languages : Flemish, French, English and German. The explanations provide sound and well-adapted doctrine. Catechists will find themselves obliged, however, to render the text more vivid. The drawings in fine colours by N. Degouy and D. Acket are very successful.

**WAGEMANS, Hans.** — **Het Œcumenisch Concile.** Hilversum, Instituut Lumen, 1960. A coloured film (N<sup>o</sup> 1091 ; 27 views) with booklet-commentary. Price : 214 F.B. — The author sets out to provide an introduction to the meaning and aim of the coming Œcumenical Council. He achieves this very well, chiefly by using scenes from every-day life. The pictures are full of ideas and possess great didactic value.

Ladislas PARTOS, S.J., *Brussels.*

# III. BOOK REVIEWS

## ENGLISH <sup>1</sup>

### MANUALS OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

SOMERVILLE, Francis, S.J. — **I. Christ our Lord. - II. Christ our Life.** London, Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1959-1960, 240-184 p. 8/6. — Teachers of religion in England's secondary schools have long complained of the lack of good class-books adapted to the special needs of their young listeners. This lack has just been supplied by the publication of the first two volumes of the series : « Religious Textbooks for Catholic Grammar Schools, » which seems to us successful. The author — who lived for some time at the « Lumen Vitae » Centre — has used as basis for his work the two first manuals of the series : « Témoins du Christ. » He has followed the same order and frequently kept close to the original text.

The plan of volume I, « **Christ our Lord** » comprises three parts : 1. Preparation for Jesus : 11 chapters giving the history of revelation from the call of Abraham to the birth of Our Saviour ; 2. Jesus on earth : 9 chapters giving historical and geographical information about the country where Christ lived and His Hidden Life ; then 7 chapters on His Public Life and the Christian message ; 3. Continuation of the Life of Jesus : 8 chapters, of which the first three treat of the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost ; then one chapter developing and putting together Our Lord's teaching about the Blessed Trinity ; the 4 last chapters are devoted to the life of the Church : The Catholic Church — The invisible side of the Church — The Second Coming of Jesus Christ — Life everlasting.

In very simple language, carefully avoiding abstract terms, the writer explains essentials of the History of Salvation to children of twelve. He makes frequent use of Holy Scripture, which he places in its true perspective, without useless digressions and anecdotes. The significance of people and events is set out aptly and naturally, leading young minds to realize the unity of Revelation in the two Testaments.

The author's method seems to us particularly good in this : historically, he does not begin with the first chapters of Genesis, but from the story of Abraham. Then only does he speak of the God of Abraham and the notions of Him and His work which the patriarch's children would have had.

The book has been well discussed in committee and was tested for a year before being finally edited. We consider that this slow development has had much to do with the book's success, whose qualities are obvious even in the summaries and practical work. These are very simple, of

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1. Collaborators in these Book Reviews : G. ARCHAMBEAUD, S.J. — J. BUYS, S.J. — A. GODIN, S.J. — L. MEILHAC.



varying difficulty, as they should be, and adapted to the young readers for whom they are intended. Much of the practical work lies in liturgical research.

Illustrations are abundant and varied, consisting of drawings by Felix M.D. Mc Cullough, restrained and well centred on one idea, and of a few fine photographs. Several maps, which only mark essentials, help the scholars to fix clearly in their minds the topographical matter given.

The book is accompanied by a «Key,» in which for each chapter, the author indicates in a few words: the matter to be taught (Knowledge Aim), its value in daily life (Conduct Aim), Scripture passages to read, a short bibliography; then he divides up the chapter giving explanatory directions useful to the teacher.

Volume II «**Christ our Life**» is devoted to the life of grace, supernatural life. Chapter I, «Members of God's Family,» begins with Our Lord's words «I have come that they may have grace,» and explains what being born again means, and becoming a child of God, and then examines the elements of this supernatural life. Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the supernatural life of angels and of men. At the end of each of these chapters, the test and fall are spoken of, which leads to chapter 4, on salvation. This is first considered in its fore-shadowing type, the coming out of Egypt, and then in its reality, the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord, repeated daily in the Eucharist. Chapters 5-12 are given to the Eucharist. Then the other Sacraments are studied, as either leading up to It, or as distributing Its fruits in special circumstances. The last chapter deals with sacramentals.

In this volume also the author follows the historical method. He could have chosen the logical order, the list of the Sacraments. He has preferred to start from what is most prominent in the minds of children — the Eucharist, at which they are present at least once a week.

This book is illustrated by photographs selected by Rev. John Gillick, S.J. The **Key** is on the same lines as the previous one, only rather more developed. J. B.

JUNGMANN, Josef A. — **Handing on the Faith.** Freiburg, Herder and London, Burns-Oates, 1959, 446 p. — Father Jungmann was eminently qualified to write a fundamental manual of catechesis. This is in no way an argumentative book — but one written serenely by some one who places things in their right order. If he stresses particularly the «contents of the Christian message, he does not minimize the questions of method. He even goes into practical details which the catechist needs.

The German, French and Spanish editions of this work have already been reviewed in *Lumen Vitae*. We refer our readers to these appreciations. We call attention, nevertheless, to the abundant notes in this edition concerning works, English books and reviews about catechesis, pastoral and religious methods. Another important speciality: the chapter on the history of catechesis has been supplemented by a summary of the catechetist movement in anglo-saxon countries. L. M.

AGNÈS-THERÈSE, Sr., I.H.M. — **All for Jesus.** Chicago, Follett Publishing Company, 1959, 128 p. — Among the many books intended for child catechesis, this one is remarkable both for contents and method. It offers parents and mistresses in primary schools and kindergartens, lessons

which initiate children, according to age, both solidly and easily into the doctrine, moral questions and the devotions of the Church. Gradually, (17 lessons) concrete and intuitive presentation of the truths concerning God, the creation, the fall, the supernatural order, lead up to the story of Our Lord, developed (47 lessons) with a keen sense of the supernatural and pedagogic demands of children. Each lesson is in six sections : special aim ; means of arousing interest ; vivid account of story or subject ; conclusions ; devout practice ; song. We would have to reproduce a whole lesson to give an exact idea of its wealth and charm.

L. M.

### *Complementary Books.*

DRINKWATER, Francis H. — **Telling the Good News.** London, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1960, 228 p., 22/. — These reflexions on religion and education come from 40 articles, from 1 to 10 pages long, on subjects connected with religious instruction, principally teaching the Catechism. The theory dear to Canon Drinkwater, as to the whole current of modern catechesis, that religious instruction is the imparting of a message of good news, much more than instruction pure and simple, is reproduced in various forms. Full of humour, the book contains many very entertaining pages.

J. B.

KILLGALLON, James and WEBER, Gerard. — **Christ in Us.** London and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1958, 302 p. — A previous American edition was entitled « *Life in Christ* » — which expressed the dynamic character of the book better ; « the gift of life » made by God to man (Part I) comes to us in « *Christ the Life* » (Part II) through « the Church, Body of Christ » (Part III) ; the Sacraments effect in us « growth in the divine Life » (Part IV), which is manifested through our obedience to the « *Commandments of God* » (Part V). Other characteristics of the catechetical movement, besides this positive approach, are apparent in the book : Scripture, papal documents and Liturgy are used fully, and form the backbone of the development of each lesson. The part on the Church is free from a defensive and controversial bias too often found in books meant for converts. We may perhaps wonder why the authors, having gone so far to do away with the traditional and rather dry presentation, have still retained the question-and-answer form. The answers, without the questions, would make a quite readable text still freer from a defensive appearance. Not only would-be converts, but all adult Catholics, could draw much profit from the study of « *Christ in us* ; » one of the best results would be a valid initiation into the word of God and the worship of the Church.

G. A.

### EDUCATORS AND EDUCATIONAL CENTRES

CURRAN, Francis X., S.J. — **The Churches and the Schools.** Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1958, 152 p. — The handing-over of the control of popular education to the State in the nineteenth century by American Protestantism is an unheard-of fact in Christianity. The attitude taken by the different Protestant confessions in the United States over this matter and the motives which guided them are explained here in detail, and form a special page in the history of education.

L. M.

HELMREICH, Ernst Ch. — **Religious Education in German Schools.** Cambridge (Massachusetts), Harvard University Press, 1959, 366 p., \$ 7.50. — This historical essay studies religious instruction in German primary and secondary schools from the beginning of the Middle Ages to 1958. The relations between Church, State and School are the basic theme, but other problems are considered : official schools, denominational or inter-denominational ; the situation of private schools in the educational system ; prayers and religious services in the schools ; qualifications required for teaching religion : training of catechists ; textbooks of religious instruction.... This research is drawn from an abundant bibliography. L. M.

NUTTING, Willis. — **Schools and the Means of Education.** Notre Dame (Indiana), Fides Publishers Association, 1959, 126 p., \$ 3.95. — An easy, lively, at times sarcastic, style — and a very real problem : Education, by means of which children and growing youth should « develop and exercise their capacities well, in knowing what is, in valuing what is good and beautiful, and in loving what is holy » (ch. I). We have here a spirited attack against seeing School as the way of achieving this result. The contrary often happens, for most youngsters learn more from life with their companions than from their « teachers ; » and the life-adjustment they acquire in this « abnormal world of teenagers » is often « a lowering of standards and a general coarsening of characters » (ch. II). When undue importance is given to competitive Sports, there result for athletes and for the student body as a whole « a very serious miseducation in the relative value of things » (ch. III). In his criticisms, of course, Dr. Nutting knows how to distinguish exceptions from the general state of things.

The School has, indeed, a true « rôle » to play (ch. VIII) as the « logical place for higher learning » and for « professional teaching ; » but, conscious of its limitations, it must allow, and even foster the action of the other means of education : « home, neighbourhood, work and leisure, not forgetting Religion, which is the « source of our inspirations. » These means (ch. IV to VII) can really « form into adult life, » but risk also, through a wrong approach, giving a « counter-education, » as v.g. when childish forms of prayers are insisted upon (pp. 47-48). Readers may find the constructive part over-optimistic at times ; but the actual experiences given show that the author's ideas are not merely utopian.

The American setting is studied. But, are the principles of education different elsewhere, and have all the errors and excesses indicated here been avoided by other nations ? G. A.

## AIMS AND HIGHWAYS OF RELIGIOUS TRAINING

### *Bible.*

GLANZMANN, George, S.J. — **The Book of Deuteronomy.** Part I. Part II. New York, Paulist Press, 1960, 80 p. — The Paulist Fathers are publishing a series of booklets on the Old and New Testaments. The present brochures give a brief commentary on Deuteronomy, which explains clearly the arrangement of the book ; the Scripture text follows and the conclusion is a « self-teaching quiz, » by which each student can test

whether he has understood and retained the explanations given in the commentary. G. A.

MACKENZIE, R., S.J. — *Introduction to the New Testament*. - SLOYAN, G. — *The Gospel of Saint Mark*. - STUHLMUELLER, C., C.P. — *The Gospel of Saint Luke*. - STANLEY, D., S.J. — *The Gospel of St. Matthew*. - FFANAGAN, N., O.S.M. — *The Acts of the Apostles*. - VAWTER, B., C.M. — *I, II Thessalonians*. - AIERN, B., C.P. — *The Epistles to the Galatians and to Romans*. - PEIFER, Cl., O.S.B. — *First Corinthians* - *Second Corinthians*. - SIEBENECK, R., C.P.P.S. — *The Pastoral Epistles*. - MCCONNELL, J., M.M. — *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. - MALY, E. — *The Epistles of Saints James, Jude, Peter*. - BROWN, R., S.S. — *The Gospel of St. John* - *The Johannine Epistles*. Coll. *New Testament Reading Guide*, Collegeville (Minn.), The Liturgical Press, 1960, \$ 0.30, \$ 4.20 the set. — This new series — which includes twelve cheaply-priced booklets — will render great service to study-circles and adults who want a serious guide for their personal reading of the Word of God. The text used throughout is the C.C.D. edition. Introductions and commentaries, prepared by well-known scholars, recommend themselves by their conciseness and richness. The necessary historical context is given, and more fully, the theological and spiritual importance of each book or passage. Numerous references are given, both in the margin and in the course of introductions or commentary. The production is attractive, as might be expected from the Liturgical Press. The text itself is in two columns, and below, the commentary runs right across the page, in clear, easily-readable type.... an improvement on the only too frequent manner of printing « notes. » G. A.

VAWTER, Bruce, C.M. — *The Bible is Different*. Paterson, St. Anthony's Guild, 1959, 54 p. — The Bible has roused and always rouses an unrivalled universal interest. The secret of this success can be given in one sentence — the Bible is God's word. This introduction leads the author to explain inspiration and revelation. His synthetic study brings out the doctrine of the Church very well, putting it at the same at the level of pupils in upper classes and of any Catholic who wishes to study these questions. L. M.

*Children's Bible*. Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1959, 96 p., \$ 0.99. — An excellent production and translation of the original German published by Patmos-Verlag under the title « Bilderbibel, » and reviewed in *Lumen Vitae*, vol. XV (1960), p. 578.

## *Liturgy and Life of Prayer.*

### *1. Liturgical Studies*

ANASTASE OF ST. JOSEPH, O.C.D., Fr. — *On Matters Liturgical*. Always North, Sacred Heart League, 1960, 108 p. — The five articles in this sturdy booklet echo the divergences of opinion between the « militant » protagonists, so to speak, of the present liturgical movement, on the people's part in the celebration of Mass, the use of the vernacular and sacred music. Commenting the encyclicals *Mediator Dei*, *Musicae sacrae*,



and a pastoral Letter by His Eminence Cardinal Siri on « the language-problem in the liturgy » the writer finds fault with opinions which he considers too advanced. He vigorously stresses his disagreement with certain principles put forward by Father Hofinger in his recent book : « Worship — the Life of the Missions » (*Pastorale liturgique en chrétienté missionnaire*).  
L. M.

JUNGMANN, Josef A., S.J. — **The Early Liturgy**. Coll. Liturgical Studies. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1959, 314 p., \$ 5.75. — The history of the Liturgy from the first years of Christianity to St. Gregory the Great is given in these pages in five large sections : The primitive Church — The Third Century — The epoch of Constantine — Developments after the fourth century — Roman liturgy before Saint Gregory the Great. Without claiming to be a guide for scientific research in the domain of the history of the liturgy, the writer provides a work of great historical value, a reliable and very interesting return to the sources of the Liturgy.  
L. M.

MILLER, John, C.S.C. — **Fundamentals of the Liturgy**. Notre Dame (Indiana), Fides Publishers Association, 1959, 532 p., \$ 6.00. — Despite its size, this book should only be considered as an introduction, according to the author, to liturgical knowledge, an account of the theological and historical data essential to the subject, based on numerous bibliographical references. It is nevertheless true that the nine chapters in the book contain a wealth of matter on the following subjects : nature of the liturgy, liturgical families within Christianity, liturgical books of the Roman rite, places of worship, structural elements of the liturgy, the Mass, Divine Office, liturgical cycle, Sacraments and sacramentals. Besides all this, the writer goes into detail on solid liturgical instruction. This work, well-informed on modern tendencies of the latest liturgical literature, is clearly on the level of advanced instruction.  
L. M.

VAGAGGINI, Cyprian, O.S.B. — **Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy**. Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1959, 242 p., \$ 3.85. — To bring out the importance of this book, it is enough to mention the theological perspective of the author. He points out with justice that the liturgical movement cannot be content with urging historical research, and promoting liturgical spirituality and pastoral. It must at the same time follow a strictly theological direction, so as to give a deep understanding of the liturgy, by replacing it in the frame of a theological synthesis, that is, by putting it into the vast and Divine plan, known to us by revelation. This opens up vistas, still too little explored, to liturgical science.  
L. M.

EMMANUEL ATHILL, Mother, C.S.A. — **Teaching Liturgy in Schools**. London, Challoner Publications, 1958, 101 p., 6/6. — Another first-class number in the « Liturgical Life Series ; » not a text-book for « classes in Liturgy » but rather a guide for « steeping one's teaching in the Liturgy » (p. 4). The author deals with the possibilities for such a programme in Catholic schools. Principles, mostly drawn from papal pronouncements, give sound directives to teachers. But we have here no mere theory ; Mother Emmanuel gives a whole treasury of practical suggestions, and numerous references to important liturgical publications.

She discusses in turn « Liturgical Beginnings » (ch. II) and all the means which will lead « towards maturity » (ch. VI) ; Mass, singing, liturgical year, occasional teaching, etc. We are glad to note that the « transition from school-chapel to parish » is not forgotten (p. 96). Finally, the author reminds everyone that « it is the daily, yearly, contact with God through the liturgy, that little by little fashions the true educator. »

G. A.

**The Liturgy and the Word of God.** Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 184 p., \$ 3.50. — The English-speaking public will eagerly welcome the translation of the conferences given during the Third National Congress of the Centre de Pastorale Liturgique at Strasbourg in 1958. The conclusions drawn at the Congress are given at the outset ; the contributions by Martinort, Jounel, Daniélou, Coudreau, Bouyer, von Balthasar, Roguet, Gelineau, Moeller, Lécuyer, Spülbeck are then given in full. All these studies are exceedingly interesting for those following the liturgical movement.

J. B.

BRASO, Gabriel, O.S.B. — **Liturgy and Spirituality.** Collegeville (Minn.), 1960, 248 p., \$ 3.50. — This is a strong plea for all Christians to draw their spirituality, i.e. their « particular way of conceiving and realizing the ideal of the Christian life, » from the Liturgy. This presentation of liturgical spirituality as **the** spirituality of the Church is solidly based on history and theological argument. Then, having considered its main characteristics — with many extracts from the Fathers or from liturgical texts themselves — its relations with private Christian life, and with the whole pastoral action of the Church are discussed in an enlightening manner. The different « systems of spirituality » are objectively presented as various and useful means to « place the perfection of the Christian life within reach of all the faithful, » and thus lead to a true liturgical spirituality, which lies at its centre. This fine book seems, however, too exclusive on an important point. If « liturgical spirituality » is **the** spirituality of the Church, can we place, as the last chapter does, at least implicitly, « Romanity » as an essential element of this spirituality ? Do the Oriental liturgies lack this quality of leading to « **the** spirituality of the Church » ? It does not seem right, or even just, to be so exclusive at this epoch of attempts at Re-union of the Church, especially when we consider the importance of the liturgy in the life of the Orthodox.

G. A.

## 2. *The Mass*

AGNÈS THÉRÈSE, Sr., I.H.M. — **Christ in the Mass.** Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1960, 72 p. — The photographs and drawings in this little book tell children the story of the Holy Sacrifice. The photograph on each page shows the attitude of the priest at given moments of the Mass, while the parallel drawing evokes a corresponding action of Our Lord when on earth. The child's mind can grasp the important truth that Christ on the altar is the Christ in the Gospel. From a catechetical point of view it is excellent. Besides this, the child will grasp the meaning of the ceremonies of the Mass more easily, and from time to time will connect the memory of the pictures with its own prayers and daily life.

L. M.

CLIFFORD HOWELL, S.J. — **The Mass Commentator's Handbook**. Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1960, 176 p., \$ 3.00. — In the first part of the book, the writer provides some very interesting information on the rôle of the Commentator during Mass, the origin of this function, the function itself, its pastoral value. It is based on the recommendations contained in «*Instructio de Musica sacra et sacra Liturgia*» of the 3rd. September 1958. The second part, by far the most important, contains short commentaries on the Masses of the Proper of Seasons and of Saints, besides the votive Masses. The general sense of the liturgy for the day is indicated in a few lines, as well as the central theme of the Prayers, Epistle and Preface. It is a very useful and practical little book to help congregations to live the liturgy of the Mass. J. B.

DESPLANQUES, F., S.J. — **Living the Mass**. London, Sands and C<sup>o</sup>, Ltd., 1959, 184 p., 12/6. — Tenth edition of the English translation of Father Desplanques' book, by Sr. Marie Constance S.C.H. It is a collection of meditations grouped round the liturgy of the Mass. The central idea is that the Mass is an act, the effects of which should influence the entire life of a Christian. These meditations seek to create feelings and an attitude of mind which prolong those entertained during our participation in the Holy Mass. J. B.

SAINT SEVERIN, Community of. — **The Mass. Christians round the Altar**. Chicago, Fides Publishers Association, 1958, 155 p., \$ 3.25. — An account of the principles and practice which accompany the celebration of Mass in the parish of Saint Severin in Paris. The parochial liturgical revival finds one of its most suggestive expressions here. Anyone can find inspiration in this example, according to circumstances, which in general, is received with enthusiasm. In any case, it is very useful to have information about this experiment.

VARIN, F., S.J. — **Holy Mass in Song**. Madurai, De Nobili Press, 32 p. — An excellent booklet for assisting at Mass, containing short commentaries and 17 hymns. Both apply to the different parts of the Holy Sacrifice, and should be used according to circumstances of time and individuals.

GAJARD, Joseph, Dom. — **The Solesmes Method**. Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1960, 86 p. — The publication in English of the French «*Le chant grégorien et la méthode de Solesmes*» is a splendid enterprise. The fundamental principles and practical rules for the interpretation of Gregorian melodies are explained in a way which inspires understanding and love of plain chant, which is both art and prayer at the same time. L. M.

Our Parish Prays and Sings, 1959, 160 p., \$ 0.75. — Seal of the Spirit. The Rite of Confirmation, 1960, 32 p., \$ 0.15. — CARLETTA, Sr., O.S.B. — Unisson Mass for Parish Use, 1960, \$ 1.00. — CÉCILE, Sr., O.S.B. — Chant-Accompaniment Simplified, 1960, \$ 1.00. — Collegeville, Minn., The Liturgical Press. — These publications are all part of the great effort made by the Liturgical Press for an active participation of the faithful in the Liturgy, and especially for a revival of church congregational singing.

« Our Parish Prays and Sings » is most important in that line : the advice of the Roman decree of Sept. 3rd, 1958 has been followed in the choice of the « Sung Mass » (other extracts from the Gregorian Kyriale are given later as alternative choice ; the English hymns selected are chosen mainly for their simplicity and religious sincerity.... « Confirmation, » together with the full text of the rite, gives schemes for instruction and discussion, which will be very useful in preparation for the Sacrament.

For all these publications, we point out the excellence and clarity of production, and at the same time, the low price, which will place these precious « tools » within the means of all parishes. G. A.

### 3. *Octave of Prayer*

HANAHOE, Edward and CRANNY, Titus. — **One Fold.** Garrison, Graynoor Press, 1959, 384 p., \$ 6.50. — If the Octave of Prayer for the Union of Churches is becoming more and more widely known, books such as this have much to do with it. Here we are given the history of the origin of the Octave, the official documents relative to it and many sermons, articles and conferences by divers authors and orators, both concerning the actual Octave and the dogmatic and liturgical subjects it suggests, for example, the need for the Church, the idea of Catholic Ecumenism, the Anglican mentality, Oriental rites, Mary and the Church in Saint Ambrose. The book concludes with a detailed study of a question recently put forward : « Vestigia Ecclesiae. » L. M.

## *Christian Life.*

### 1. *Testimony of the Church*

BAUR, Chrysostomus, O.S.B. — **John Chrysostom and his Time.** Vol. I. **Antioch.** London, Sands and Co, 1959, LXXV-400 p., 30/-net. — This second edition of a valuable work takes into consideration what has been published since 1929 on the great Doctor's position in certain dogmatic, moral and pedagogic questions. In spite of its high scientific level, this book is not exclusively for specialists, but for a larger public, notably for priests and cultured laity. They will find here the first part of St. John Chrysostom's life : childhood and adolescence, studies, monastic life, diaconate, priesthood, then a synthesis of his teaching. His episcopate forms the subject of volume II. L. M.

STEINMANN, Jean. — **Saint Jerome and his Times.** Notre Dame (Indiana), Fides Publishers, 1959, 360 p., \$ 5.95. — A vivid biography, full of information, arousing keen interest in the saint's activities and writings. There are six chapters : Childhood and youth ; the wandering monk ; Papal secretary ; the cell at Bethlehem ; the Monks' War ; on the



threshold of the Promised Land. As in his other works, the writer unites deep erudition and clear, animated description, which bring to life both the character and chequered existence of his subject, who ever remained completely devoted to his work of exegesis, which benefited the Church for all time.

L. M.

RICCIOTTI, Giuseppe. — **The Age of Martyrs.** Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Co., 1959, 306 p., \$ 4.95. — The «great persecution» under Diocletian, with its consequences and the reign of Constantine, are the subject not of critical study, but of a critical account. Ricciotti's method and style, which have made him famous, re-appear. If he shows up the courage of the confessors of the faith, he does not hide the malice or weakness of the «traditores» and the «lapsi.» He knows how to disclose the great qualities and the defects in Constantine's reign. The authentic countenance of the Church shines but more brightly, as is proved by the chapter assigned to the Synods and Councils dealing with the Donatists and Arianism.

L. M.

MARTINI, Teri. — **Sandals on the Golden Highway.** Paterson, St. Anthony Guild Press, 1959, 140 p., \$ 2.50. — This is the biography of a Franciscan friar, Father Junipero Serra, missionary in California and Mexico, in the eighteenth century. Boys and girls will be captivated and edified by the story, simple yet rich in adventure and heroism for God's glory.

L. M.

REILE, Louis. — **The Battle and Brother Louis.** Westminster (Maryland), The Newman Press, 1959, 172 p., \$ 3.25. — Youth will be attracted by this somewhat mysterious title. Inside they will find the author's experiences as a Marianist Brother. The alert, often ironical, and at times pathetic style will catch readers' attention, who will discover the ups and downs, the heartaches, but chiefly the joy of a teaching Brother. All this makes a fine book which will foster vocations for, as Card. Cushing writes in the Preface, «the greatness and nobility of the Brother's vocation is brought into clear focus.»

G. A.

ROBO, Étienne. — **Saint Joan.** London, Sands and C°, 1959, 128 p., 9/6 net. — While following the different phases in the life of St. Joan of Arc, the writer sketches in the characteristics of the woman and the saint. This is the chief merit of the book and which makes its interest.

## 2. *Spiritual Directives*

BEAUDENON, Canon. — **Formation to Humility.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1958, 160 p., 12/6. — The theory and practice of humility are closely connected in these 30 meditations on this fundamental virtue of the Christian life. In the middle there are meditations on «Jesus lowly,» Whose words and example enlighten the teaching of theologians, spiritual writers and mystics, which are lavishly set down in these pages.

COLIN, Louis, C.S.S.R. — **Jesus Our Model.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1958, 144 p., 15/-. — This treatise on perfection, based on imitation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, recalls very aptly the teaching of Our Saviour,

the apostles, tradition, and the life of the Church about the royal road of perfection. It then explains practical means in detail, in a word Christian asceticism, which leads us to tend towards perfection, and then to realize this imitation of Our Saviour in our daily life : life of prayer, Sacramental life, and daily actions.

CURÉ D'ARS. — **Sermons.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1959, 196 p. — In this anthology readers will find sermons preached by the holy Curé at the beginning of his ministry, when he painstakingly prepared each one. The ideas may recall the spirit of those days, and of the authors abundantly used by the young priest. We may smile, or be appalled at the severity of some passages, but the simplicity of style, the concrete and homely comparisons, the obvious sincerity, still revive something of what made the great power of attraction and conversion possessed by the Saint.

DESPLANQUES, F., S.J. — **Christ at Every Crossroad.** Glasgow, Sands and Co., Ltd., 1959, 128 p., 10/6. — Subjects of meditation for workers and employed, to help them to live in union with Christ in the accomplishment of their duties. These meditations, whose production and style are specially arranged to incite reflexion, could well be put into the hands of pupils in professional schools.

IPARRAGUIRRE, Ignatius, S.J. — **A Key to the Study of the Spiritual Exercises.** Allahabad 2, St. Paul Publications, 1960, 128 p., Rs. 1.50. — This translation of the original Spanish is intended for the young clergy in India and Ceylon. The first part supplies general directions for a retreat-giver, the second, the fundamental orientation of the Exercises. This careful study of the contents and method of the Exercises retains its full value in the translation, and is also very well produced.

LEEN, Edward, C.S.Sp. — **My Last Retreat.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1959, 142 p., 15/-. — An annual retreat given to the Sisters of the Holy Rosary. The great principles developed by Father Leen throughout his life, writings, sermons and conferences, which have made him renowned, are to be found in these pages.

MERTON, Thomas. — **Spiritual Direction and Meditation.** Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1960, 100 p. — Spiritual direction and meditation are subjects of a copious literature, whose principles and most important directives are resumed in this book. Its comprehensive view reflects the loftiness, simplicity and the deeply human aspect of Benedictine asceticism.  
L. M.

### *3. Marriage and the Family*

CAVANAGH, John R., M.D. — **Fundamental Marriage Counseling.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1958, 568 p., 30/-. — This important work, written in collaboration under Dr. Cavanagh's direction, is a summary of useful knowledge concerning marriage from a Catholic standpoint. There are 5 sections : I. Biological aspects. II. Sexual aspects. III. Fecundity. IV. Social aspects. V. Religious aspects. The Book has a very open

perspective, and candidly faces all the problems on marriage which people of our day have to solve.

J. B.

GEISSLER, Eugène. — **Family Man.** Notre Dame (Indiana), Fides Publishers, 1960, 158 p., \$ 3.50. — The father of 12 children, E. Geissler discusses in these pages, the duties, joys and sorrows of Christian family-life, attentive to the example of the Holy Family at Nazareth. The book is not a treatise. Within the simple yet varied framework of family-life, these thoughts and reflections opportunely remind us of the Christian doctrine and moral teaching on marriage, especially the duties of husband and wife towards their children.

L. M.

HERTZ, Solange. — **Women, Words and Wisdom.** Westminster (Maryland), The Newman Press, 1959, 184 p., \$ 3.50. — Thanks to a wide general culture, S. Hertz, five years a mother, knows how to give an elevated meaning to the duties, occupations and cares of a mistress of the house. In a pleasing style, entertaining and full of humour, her book sheds the glory of faith upon daily realities. She writes, for example : « The father of the family, like the abbot, stands in the place of God.... Every human act is sacramental, or wants to be.... Every human birth is an image of the Incarnation.... Each human soul has its first origin in the mind of God. » Quotations and examples from Scripture and the lives of the Saints add constant charm to these thoughts. Families will read them with much pleasure and profit.

L. M.

## STUDIES ON THE MATTER OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

### Sources.

DIRKSEN, Aloys, C.P.P.S. — **Elementary Patrology.** St. Louis, B. Herder Book Co., 1959, 314 p., \$ 4.00. — The plan adopted by Father Dirksen in order to give a wide view of patristic literature seems very apt for initiation and study. The first book exposes the chief trends and the great patristic writers under three large headings : beginnings — the Golden Age — decline. The life and works of each author is outlined briefly. In the second book, the historical order gives place to the alphabetical, to deal with other patristic writers and writings, less known but most imposing in number. This manual will prove very useful to students.

CLAUDIA, Sr., I.H.M. — **Dictionary of Papal Pronouncements. Leo XIII to Pius XII 1878-1957.** New York, Kenedy and Sons, 1958, 216 p., \$ 6.50. — This dictionary renders accessible to all research and study of papal documents issued from 1878 to 1957. Its alphabetical, chronological and analytical indices are well planned and executed.

L. M.

### Apologetics.

ANTOINE, F., S.J. — **Where We All Meet.** Calcutta, Light of the East Series, 1957, 68 p. — This booklet is the echo of a discussion on religion actually held between five debaters : a young Hindoo, three young

Catholics and a Catholic priest, with a sincere desire for mutual understanding. The conversations centred on the nature of religion, salvation through Christ and His Church, the creation, God's redemptive plan, personal religion, etc. Without useless side-tracking, the questioners enter immediately upon the matter under discussion, and reach clear, precise and very helpful solutions. The apostolate in pagan intellectual centres will do well to draw inspiration from this little book.

RIEDMANN, Aloïs. — **The Truths of Christianity.** Vol. I. **The Truth about God and His Works.** Cork, The Mercier Press, 1959, 228 p., 30/-. — The English translation of Riedmann's apologetical work has met with well-deserved success. A pupil of the celebrated ethnologist and historian of religions, W. Schmidt, S.V.D., Riedmann uses the positive method. Under his learned pen, sacred and secular documents, philosophical and religious doctrines, modern discoveries, teach us about the Divine attributes of Providence, the origin of man, the immortality of the soul. The vast erudition of the book affords plentiful matter for sermons, catechesis and conferences. L. M.

### *Moral theology.*

BRUYLANTS, A., S.J. — **Hidden Treasure. A Primer of Morals, I and II.** Calcutta, Xavier Publications, 1959, 120-120 p., Rs. 1.50 per vol. — These two textbooks of Moral Instruction for non-Catholic children are remarkable for two reasons : their lively and interesting appearance and the serious attempt at adaptation for Indian children who study in the English-teaching medium schools. This double characteristic is apparent in the stories, exercises in reflection, questions-and-answers, tasks or games found on every page, and even in the choice of fine full-page photographs. The 10-12 year-old school-children will enjoy the books, and teachers will find them more agreeable to use than the drier kind of Moral Science text-books in use up to now. Book I chiefly deals with the child's relationship to God (God, as He can be known through the light of reason) ; Book II takes the child round its own world : family, school, motherland, neighbour and... self.

GILLEMAN, Gérard, S.J. — **The Primacy of Charity in Moral Theology.** Westminster (Maryland), The Newman Press, 1959, 420 p., \$ 5.50. — English translation of the second edition of Father Gilleman's «*Le Primat de la Charité en Théologie morale,*» by André Vachon, S.J. and William F. Ryan, S.J. This work is significant of an epoch in the life of the Church, that of the re-discovery of a dimension of Christian morality, which is not so much a codification of means to know, or even to avoid, sin, as teaching seeking to conform our lines to the Will of God. Our Christian life is built up on charity, communicated to us through the gift of God ; moral teaching which tells us how to act, will therefore, be specifically different from all natural Christian morality, because it will be centred on charity. The entire work of Father Gilleman in its three sections : Historical, Speculative and Practical, proves this thesis. (See the detailed review of the French edition by Father Godin, S.J. in *Lumen Vitae*, vol. IX (1954), pp. 569-581.)



CARPENTIER, René, S.J. — **Life in the City of God**. New York, Benzinger Bros, 1959, 192 p., \$ 3.75. — This book is a fine application of the actual revival in dogmatic, and chiefly moral, theology to the religious life, passing from a negative presentation, insisting more on rules, to a positive presentation of the ideal to follow. Thus, the religious life is replaced in the context of the Gospel and the Church, which leads us to consider the «Mystery» of the religious life. Charity and Adoration, the perfection contained in Christ's «way of the counsels,» describe the life of a religious, the ideal towards which he or she always tends. Only on this background do the «obligations» of the vows take up their full meaning... and here we find the clarity and sureness of doctrine which have made the success of the «Catechism of the Vows,» of which this book is an «entirely new version.» All religious will find this «Life in the City of God» safe and stimulating spiritual food. Reading the two first parts at least, layfolk would learn to understand better those whose life is entirely consecrated to God. G. A.

### *Booklets on religious culture.*

Guild Pamphlets, Paterson (N.J.), St. Anthony's Guild, 1959, \$ 0.10 and \$ 0.20. — **Apostle of California - The Dies Irae - In Her Sister's Shadow - Learn from St. Anthony - The Little Girl - Our Eucharistic Lord - The Penitent Swordsman - «Thou art all fair.»** — Booklets with a clearly edifying aim; they urge to piety and virtue by the good example they describe and the spiritual practices they suggest.

Queen's Work Pamphlets, St. Louis (Miss.). The Queen's Work 1959 and 1960. 24 p. each, \$ 0.10. — **An Examination of Conscience - Catholics in Secular Colleges - Quiz a Jesuit - Sex...** especially for the Catholic Teen-Ager.

**Catholic Views on over-population - Code for Baby-sitters - The Ecumenical Council - Know Your Temperament - Must you really die? - Private Vows and Promises - The Sacramentals. Aids to Perfection - Some Books for Spiritual Reading - You can Be Better.**

In a few pages, full of information and very up-to-date, «The Queen's Work» booklets provide the theoretical and practical solution of individual and social questions. The authors manage to be understood by youth as well as adults. Their method and style prove useful to priests and those engaged in the teaching apostolate.

### PEDAGOGY AND METHODS

DONOHUE, John W., S.J. — **Work and Education**. Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1959, 238 p. — The philosophy of education, very flourishing subject in the United States, gives rise to many monographies. This one puts forward a philosophy of work in relation to education. The theories of Marx, de Dewey, of Babbitt-Hutchins-Adler on work are developed and compared. Then the writer seeks the elements of a Christian synthesis, under the following titles: The dignity of work in Christian thought — Towards a Christian Humanism on work. Religious instruction

for pupils in technical schools would derive much profit from this scholarly work, on the technical mentality and how to make it thoroughly Christian.

FLAHERTY, Mary Rosalia, Sr., R.S.M. — **Patterns of Administration in Catholic Colleges for Women in the United States.** Washington, the Catholic University of America Press, 1960, 118 p., \$ 2.00. — This thesis is presented according to all the rules of scientific research with synoptic Tables, statistics and bibliography. Aims: to discover the types of administration used in Catholic colleges for girls in the United States, usually directed by Religious Orders or Congregations; to examine a vital question, i.e. : the relations of the college with the religious community that controls it, that is, the amount of dependence, or autonomy, that the college presents, as a separate educational unit, in a Community, and in what measure the ideals, customs and traditions of the Community affect the college. The practical import of this book will not escape teachers.

RODIL, Concepcion, B.S.E. — **The Fusion of Discipline and Counseling Functions at the College Level.** Washington, The Catholic University of America Press, 1960, 100 p., \$ 1.75. — Supervising discipline and giving the pupils advice are two parallel functions in American « colleges. » This book seeks to determine when these two functions can be fused into one, or when they should be separate, which means, when they can be performed by the same person, or when they should be done by different people. To work out this enquiry, the writer has used the interview with 17 members of a teaching staff, and the questionnaire, answered by 423 pupils, 177 professors and 102 members of the teaching staff. The book produces some very interesting psychological information in the domain of education.

L. M.

## RELIGIOUS SOCIOLOGY

HARDON, John, S.J. — **Christianity in Conflict.** Westminster (Maryland), The Newman Press, 1959, 300 p., \$ 4.50. — This « Catholic View of Protestantism » covers all the points on which Christians are divided : Bible, concept of the ministry, moral questions, Church-State relations, etc. The phenomenon of « sectarianism » is then studied, and also the desire for unity, mainly apparent in the World Council of Churches. The study is frank ; the chasm between the Catholic position and the various Protestant opinions is bluntly exposed. It may seem somewhat unfair to include in the same study all the shades of Protestant thought, thus unavoidably stressing differences. But if the ground is to be cleared for fruitful Re-union work, the American position, with its many sects, must be analyzed, without acrimony, but without illusions. This the author does with an objectivity acknowledged even by Protestants. « Christianity in Conflict » will help the American reader to know what his Christian brethren think... but he must take care not to put indiscriminate labels on all whom he may meet. The European reader will learn some aspects of the problem of Church Unity, aspects which should never be forgotten, wherever œcumenical apostolate takes place.

McAvoy, Thomas, C.S.C. — **Roman Catholicism and the American Way of Life.** Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1960, 248 p., \$ 4.50. — This collection of historical and sociological essays deals with the integration of Catholicism in actual American society. In the first Part, this problem is placed in relation to the «Present Position of Religion in America» (section I), described by a non-Catholic as «the religiousness of a secularized society» and «the transformation of America from a Protestant country into a three-religion country.» This situation explains the importance of problems met by Catholics who, starting from a status of minority (ch. IV) advance, intentionally, towards «Americanization» (ch. IX); problems on intellectual (ch. VI), social (ch. VII) and political (ch. VIII) planes. The Second Part deals entirely with the immigration, which played so important a part in the numerical progress, and in the problems, of American Catholicism. Much place is devoted to the «complications of language and tradition» (Part II, section II) due to the various ethnic groups composing the Catholic flock in the United States. The book will help towards a real understanding of American Catholicism and towards the correct solution of the «unity-in-diversity» problem, round which, an author asserts, the future of the Catholic Church in American society turns.

Weigel, Gustave, S.J. — **Faith and Understanding in America.** New York, The Macmillan Co., 1959, 170 p., \$ 3.75. — A well-known sociologist and theologian studies, in this book, the present religious revival in America, and its œcumenical problems. There is no fruitful agreement without frankness. So the writer first describes the «Catholic Conception of Religious Truth» (I), the better to examine the religious importance — progress and ambiguities — of the present day (II, III). After a clear «Introduction to American Catholicism» (V), the development of Catholic and of Protestant theology is analysed, without masking the divergences, yet with sympathy and broad understanding (VI, VII). Divergence of position should not foster isolationism. On the contrary, Protestantism is a «Catholic concern» (VIII). According to the author, mutual approach cannot take place within the frame of official movements which group the various Christian Bodies, but «efficiently and cordially in many small local groups in which, we can speak our minds and hearts, with Christian freedom and love.» This lucid exposition of a problem which has not exactly the same data in the United States as in other countries, will render great service to all who concern themselves with the union of Christians all over the world. G. A.

## RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Loneragan, Bernard J.F. — **Insight : a Study of Human Understanding.** London and New York, Longmans Green, 1957, revised Students Edition, 1958, 786 p. — One could reproach Bergson's philosophical method with recommending intuitions rather than multiplying them. Father Loneragan, S.J.'s book, already hailed as «one of the great philosophical treatises of the century» (E.F. O'Doherty in *Studies*), offers, on the contrary, a succession of perspectives on the nature and exercise of **insight** in the different branches of human knowledge. «In order to

convey an insight into insight » (p. IX), the author flashes the enlightening and reflective ray of **insight** successively on the mathematical and empiric sciences, on common sense (and its way of avoiding insight), on deliberate thought. In Part II he specifies the implications of insight as knowledge : sensitive consciousness, comprehension, affirmation. As he goes on, metaphysics appear, of which reference to God is the underlying support and the application of theology (dogmatic development in continuity) is the final summit. Potency, Form, Act are its articulations. An Aristotelian and Thomist line of thought certainly, which have here become brilliantly inclusive of all branches of science. Following this use of penetrating intellectualism, one regrets that a whole panel of human reality is omitted : love. Inter-personal relations are only represented with regard to God. The writer, however, seems to promise further development in this direction. We hope so the more fervently that we are glad to think that he wrote his book « as a humanist » (731). Is not rigour of thought the culminating point of any humanism, even of Christian humanism....

A. G.

**The Meaning of Death.** Volume published by Herman FEIFEL, New York and London, McGraw Hill Book Publ., 1959, 350 p., 50 s. 6 d. — Eighteen essays, articles or results of research are grouped together here. The whole makes attractive reading, much more than an ordinary anthology, nearly every article offers an original contribution on the subject of death.

Four phenomenological analyses (Jung's seems to me the best) surround some theological reflexion remarkably put forward by Tillich : a profound study, but strongly influenced by the Reformation doctrine on the radically unstable value of time, even after the Redemption. Three very interesting results of psychological research describe the attitude towards death observed in Hungarian children (Nagy), American adolescents (Kastenbaum), and in adults, old people or mentally ill (attitudes compared by Feifel). Four essays follow on the idea of death in modern literature, contemporary art and funeral customs and mourning. Finally six different reports cover clinical and experimental aspects ; the most interesting (by I. Alexander and A. Adlerstein) compares the attitudes of young students, radically without religion and, on the contrary, deeply religious, in their expectation of death and the life beyond — and the most original (by Curt Richter) proves by experiment that some sudden deaths, in rats, can be traced to emotional phenomenon (discouragement, despair), nervous reaction at a high level of integration.

Presenting these articles, Feifel pleads with us to learn how to talk about waiting for death, with those who from their age know what it means, but who must usually repress in solitude their desire to speak of it. Professor Gardner Murphy writes a critical summary of these 18 chapters, adding a few considerations, always to the point and often masterly.

A. G.



## DUTCH

The Dutch section of the Lumen Vitae Centre has published this year in **Christus in de Godsdienstige vorming IV** a bibliography of 300-400 books. **Jaarboek 1960**. The publishers Desclée de Brouwer supply it free to teachers using the manuals «Leven in Christus,» and it is on sale for others interested. We venture to refer our readers to this, and only give a simplified list here, followed by a review of books sent to the Editor since it was published.

*1. Books reviewed in the above-mentioned publication*

- ADAMS, Dr. L.M. — **Algemene Psychologie** (Deel II). Antwerpen, Plantijn, 1959, 195 blz.
- ANCIAX, Mag. Dr. P. — **Het Sakrament van het Huwelijk**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1959, 302 blz., 80 F.
- BEIRNAERT, Drs. S., VAN HOVE, Dr. W., VERSTUYF, Drs. S. — **Inleiding tot de Psychologie**. Antwerpen, Plantijn, 1959, 216 blz. Deel I.
- Bibliografische Lijst voor Geestelijke Lezing**, o.l.v. P. Achter, S.J. — Antwerpen, Patmos, 1960, 138 blz., 40 F.
- BLESS, H. — **Inleiding tot de pastorale psychopathologie**. Roermond, J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1959, 208 blz., 195 F.
- De Boeken van het Oude Testament**, uit de grondtekst vertaald en uitgelegd. Red. v. Dr A. v. d. Born, Prof. Dr J. v. Dodewaard, Prof. Dr W. Grossouw, Prof. Mag. Dr J. v. d. Ploeg, O.P., Roermond-Maaseik, Romen en Zonen, 1952 vv. gemidd. 400 p., 300 F. — Reeds verschenen : Josuë, Rechters, Ruth ; Samuël, Koningen ; Kronieken ; Spreuken, Prediker, Wijsheid ; Jeremias, Klaagliederen, Baruch ; Ezechiël, Daniël ; de kleine Profeten. — With catechesis following the Biblical revival, this set of books for Biblical studies in Dutch will be extremely useful to teachers of religion.
- DE FRAINE, J. — **Bijbels bidden**. Beyaert, Brugge, 1960, 256 blz.
- DESMEDT, Mgt. J. — **Het Huwelijk**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1960, 45 blz., 45 F.
- DE VAUX, R., O.P. — **Hoe het oude Israël leefde**. Roermond, J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1960, 411 blz., 250 F.
- DE VOCHT, Lod. — **Psalmen**. Antwerpen, Edelweiss S.V. — Ons Parochieblad, 1958, 52 blz.
- FABIANUS, P., O.F.M. Cap. — **Kerkboek voor het katholieke meisje**. Roermond, J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1956, 444 blz., 125 F.
- FRANSEN, P., S.J. — **Gods genade en de mens**. Antwerpen, Patmos, 1959, 109 p., 55 F. — For priests and cultured laity, one of the best books published in recent years.
- GROLLENBERG, L.H. — **Kleine Atlas van de Bijbel**. Brussel, Elsevier, 1960, 196 blz., 95 F.
- GUARDINI, R. — **De Heilige in ons wereldbeeld**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1960, 59 blz., 38 F.
- GUARDINI, R. — **Van Advent tot Epifanie**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1959, 111 blz., 38 F.
- GUARDINI, R. — **De Naastenliefde in gevaar**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1960, 66 blz., 38 F.
- HÄRING, Dr. Bernard. — **De Wet van Christus**. Brussel, Standaard/Utrecht, Spectrum, 1959, 607 blz., 260 F.

- JOURNET, Pierre, O.P. — **Ik geloof**. Utrecht, Canteleer, Antwerpen, Internationale Pers, 1960, 96 blz., 40 F.
- LEBRET, L.J. — **Hier ben ik, Heer**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1959, 217 blz., 55 F.
- LEPPICH, J., S.J. — **God tussen ouden en nieuwe goden**. Tielt, Lannoo, 1959, 232 blz.
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COPPES, D. pr. — **Totdat Hij terugkomt**, 2nd. dr. Bilthoven, Nelissen ; Hasselt, Heidelberg, 1959, 178 p., 75 F. — About the Church, in an alert, conversational style for young people of 18 ; welcomes their problems. Constructive in approach : « The Church is three things : preaching, the Sacraments, charity. » The chapters of the first two sections contain 60 pages each ; the third section has only twenty, but much has already been said about the charity of Christ in the preceding sections. Very useful for teachers and interesting reading for young students.

DE GROOT, D., o Praem. — **Gebedenboek voor Jongens**. Averbode, 1960, 256 p., 45 F. — For 12-14 year-olds, an age for which search is often made for suitable prayer-books. Partially prepared from prayers composed by the boys themselves. Adapted to their various needs, it invites meditation and personal prayer.

FREITAG, A., S.V.D. — **Historische Wereldatlas van het Christendom**. Hasselt, Heidelberg, 1959, 200 p., 600 illustrations, 32 maps in colour,

200 columns of text, 595 F. — The sub-title gives the exact contents of this monumental work : *Cultuur-historische Missieatlas*. These pictures, accompanied by text, and showing the cultural and geographical setting, the pioneers and organizers, the difficulties and successes, the prayer and charitable works, put before us all these aspects of missionary activity. The maps and tables of statistics show the development of the missions. The perfect production is worthy of the imposing character of the contents.

**Kern-serie** van G-3, Ulbergen, 6 booklets published 1959-1960, 64 p. each, Fl. 0,35. — Practical little books, striking and up-to-date, intended for young men in military service, but several are equally useful for others, e.g. no. 3. On the Ten Commandments ; no. 4. On Anna Frank ; no. 5. On the priest and the layman.

KOORYMAN, H.J. — **Zoekt eerst het Rijk Gods**. 4 vols. 2 of which are out, Hertogenbosch, Malmberg, 176 and 184 p., Fl. 4,90. — From the second year of Secondary. The idea is to found religious doctrine on the development of revelation, and to unite its different aspects in an organic synthesis. The first book, on the Old Testament, concerning which the author benefits by the revival already realized elsewhere, is excellent. It does not seem accurate to us, all the same, to treat the epoch of the prophets and sages as one of decline. The second volume is not so good, from want of relief, both in general arrangement and style. The next edition will need important corrections, pp. 112 and 114.

LETSCHERT, J., O.S.B. — **Scheppend denken in de liturgie**. Desclée de Brouwer, 1960, 220 p., 86 F. — To bring out the necessity for liturgical symbolism, the author describes the intellect's activity, stressing its need for forms of expression. He draws chiefly upon Scholastic doctrine.

VAN DER MEER de Walcheren, P. — **Het witte Paradijs**. Desclée de Brouwer, re-edition with a new preface, 1960, 77 p., 75 F. — Life of the Carthusians at La Valsainte. An especially valuable testimonial in our troubled world.

VAN HAREN, J., jr. — **Voor hen is het Koninkrijk**. 2nd. dr. Den Haag, Pax ; Merksem, Westland, 1960, 108 p. — The author asks whether religious teachers of children give sufficient latitude to their spontaneous growth in favourable surroundings. We should respect the free action of God in the child more than we do. Suggestions forming a good counter-balance to certain exaggerations. This does not lessen the need for vigilant help, especially in less favourable settings.

### *Translations*

BERTRAMS, W., S.J. — **Het celibaat van de priester**. Desclée de Brouwer, 1960, 113 p., 66/80 F. — Rather rigid in laying down principles and in commenting on juridical dispositions.

BOUYER, L. — **Woord, Kerk en Sacramenten in het protestantisme en in het katholicisme**. Desclée de Brouwer, 1960, 106 p., 69 F.

GALOT, J., S.J. — **Het Hart van Maria**. D.D.B. 1960, 289 p., 96/120 F.

GUTZWILLER, R. — **Meditaties over Lukas**. 2<sup>e</sup> dr. Hasselt, Heide-land, 1960, 497 p., 135 F. — To be recommended.

SCHLIER, H. — **Het Woord Gods**. Paul Brand ; Desclée de Brouwer, 1959, 110 p. — The active reality of the Word of God in the New Testament.

TORU, H. — **Jakoto en haar vodenrapers**. Desclée de Brouwer, 1960, 211 p., 66/80 F. — A moving story ; a few illustrations taken from the film.

WALTER, E. — **Het Godsverbond gisteren en vandaag**. Hasselt, Heide-land, 1959, 114 p., 75 F. — The subject is the Alliance : Personages of antiquity are well brought out ; the interpretation of vicarious satisfaction is less successful.

M. VAN CASTER, *Brussels*.

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